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A HISTORY OF THE EARLY PART OF THE REIGN OF JAMES THE SECOND; WITH AN INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER. BY THE RIGHT HON. CHARLES JAMES FOX. TO WHICH IS ADDED AN APPENDIX.—4to. pp. 486, 1l. 16s.; royal paper, 2l. 12s. 6d. Miller, London. 1808.

I CAN perfectly well recollect the time, (such is the unenviable property of old age) when the author of the work, now under my review, first entered upon public business as a senator and statesman; and having contemplated, though at humble distance from his person, the bold career of his politics and the bright display of his talents, I witnessed the coming on of his death, and was not unobservant of the consequences, that followed fast upon it.

The leading part he took in many memorable events, that will be matter of record in the annals of his time, give assurance to the world, that he has not descended to the grave like common men, that are forgotten; but with a claim upon posterity for an after-trial, which, the longer it is postponed, the better chance it has to be impartially conducted and discussed; for though his country in particular, and enlightened Europe in

general, are prepared to read his memoirs with avidity, few, very few, of those, who have lived with him, are likely to give an unprejudiced delineation of Mr. Fox's character.

Being so decidedly the champion of his party, he divided his contemporaries into partisans. Some became even factious in their idolatry, others were as violent in their dislike of him. To launch the vessel, freighted with his reputation, upon a sea, that has not yet abated of its agitation from the struggle of two angry adverse tides, would be a perilous experiment. The intimate who witnessed the amenity of his temper, and the cordiality of his attachments, ought not to be entrusted with the pen of the biographer; as little could we rely upon him, who neither loved his person, nor approved of his politics. If it were the writer's object to expose his frailties, they were too prominent to escape his search; if he rather wished to dwell upon his brilliant qualities, they were too dazzling to be closely and minutely scanned.

Who, that had enjoyed the partnership of his social hours, and been admitted to inspect his heart, would be so sturdy an enthusiast for impartiality, as to sacrifice all the feelings of friendship to the dignity of truth; and consent to degrade the dead, whom he reveres, for the sake of undeceiving the living, whom as his readers only he respects? From the man of the present time it is not to be expected. The page is yet unwritten, nay, the writer is most probably unborn, whose destiny it is to pass just judgement on the life and character of Charles James Fox.

He is now no more, and has left the fragment of a few pages behind him, which is quite as much as I have any right to meddle with, and something more perhaps than I can manage well; for I scorn to disguise my disabilities; the reader won't learn much from me; I shall not send him to his books, for I have none within my reach to resort to. I write upon an empty table without authorities to aid me; but I dictate what I write from honest motives to befriend the living and not



wrong the dead. How to execute that purpose I need no instruction : I have that within me, which requires no teacher.

This solitary volume, now before me, is a small thing for a great man to leave behind him, as the only relick of his literary labours. It is imperfect, and might have puzzled some men how to have disposed of it, had they been in the predicament of its noble editor. He was under no such embarrassment but from the liberal motive of *fulfilling the wishes of the public*, committed it to the press.

Now here I confess I should have paused, and perhaps have done injustice to the general ardour by supposing it possible, that out of the many, who *wished* to see the work I was entrusted with, there might be some, who *wished* it for the spiteful pleasure of finding fault. Thus, by the error of over-caution (which certainly is not the error inexperience is most subject to) I should have lost the opportunity of paying that handsome compliment to public curiosity, which the noble editor sets out with when he declares,

“ It would be sufficient to justify the publication of any fragment  
“ of his [Mr. Fox’s] labours, even if it had been found in a more  
“ unfinished state than the chapters, which compose the body of this  
“ volume.”

Now, though I stand in just admiration of the spirit and magnanimity of this sentiment, I am in some doubt whether it would be quite apology sufficient for sacrificing the literary reputation of a departed friend by publishing his unfinished and imperfect compositions ; and, the higher he had stood in the world’s esteem, whilst living, the less inclined I should be to treat the world with an opportunity of abasing him, after he was dead.

Public curiosity was certainly a good friend to the noble editor in his bargain with Mr. Miller ; but if the work, which Mr. Miller purchased, had been *in a more unfinished* (and of course worse) *state*, than it is, I am afraid the curiosity of the public would not have saved him from a losing bargain, or the author’s memory from a fatal blow.

It appears upon the authority of Lord Holland, that Mr. Fox gave no positive injunctions for the printing of his work ; that

“ With an ardour, such as few in the eagerness of youth, or in  
 “ pursuit of fame or advantage, are capable of feeling, he yet direct-  
 “ ed his studies to no particular object.”

This was unlucky ; this was to be lamented : when we are told of  
 “ the vigour and exertion of his faculties,” it causes us to regret,  
 that they were lost to the world, and wasted by expansion upon  
 various trifles, amusing only to himself and friends. *Studies,*  
*directed to no particular object,* are what I cannot understand :  
 I must take them upon credit from the editor as he meant  
 them to be taken : Mr. Fox’s *love of literature* was above  
 all that “ the eagerness of youth, avarice or ambition, is ca-  
 “ pable of feeling ;” yet all this vehement passion was without a  
 purpose ; how then could it be a passion for literature ? Where  
 there is something so vague in the passion, so decisive in the  
 supposed pursuit, I know not how they can be classed together.  
 In fact we gain the best insight into the character of Mr. Fox’s  
 studies from the circumstance of his frequently repeating the  
 following passage in Cowper :

“ How various his employments, whom the world  
 “ Calls idle :”

from which we may collect, that whilst he was conscious of be-  
 ing *variously employed*, the world, in spite of Mr. Cowper,  
 had a right to *call him virtually idle* ; till, fixing on the revo-  
 lution of 1688, he devoted himself to the laudable

“ Desire of rescuing from misrepresentation the most glorious  
 “ transaction of our history ; the opportunity of instructing his  
 “ countrymen in the real nature of their constitution ; and the  
 “ hope of impressing on mankind those lessons applicable to all  
 “ times, which are to be drawn from that memorable occurrence.”

The critic will see an incorrectness in the construction of this  
 passage, but the meaning is obvious.

“ As this work advanced, his [Mr. Fox’s] allusions to various  
 “ literary projects, such as an edition of Dryden, a defence of Ra-  
 “ cine and the French stage, essay on the beauties of Euripides,  
 “ &c. &c. became more frequent, and were more confidently ex-  
 “ pressed.”

I take this upon the authority of the noble editor, and, as that cannot be questioned, have only to express my surprise that *the work did advance*, whilst the author's thoughts were distracted and drawn off from the business it was upon by so many and such fanciful *allusions*.

To this follows, in corroboration of the fact, the extract of a letter written in 1803 by Mr. Fox to the editor, in which he says—"If ever I publish MY EDITION of Dryden's works, I will—" but it is not matter of fair criticism to remark upon private and familiar letters, written carelessly without any possible view towards publication, and which for that and every other reason ought not to have been published. I therefore consider it as a breach of good manners to pry into their contents, and pass them all over with no other observation, than what I have just now submitted; for the justice of which I appeal to the feelings of every candid reader.

In the tenth page of his advertisement to the reader, Lord Holland relates, that Mr. Fox "talked of writing, either in "the form of a dedication, or dialogue, a treatise on the three "arts of poetry, history, and oratory." It is matter of regret that he only *talked* of this, and rather singular that, with a mind so fertile in literary projects, he should be represented as a writer, *whose progress in whatever he undertook would necessarily be extremely slow*. In the same page the following paragraph occurs:

"The plan of such a work [meaning the treatise on poetry, "history and oratory] seemed, in a great measure, to be digested "in his head, and from the sketch he drew of his design to me, it "would, if completed, have been an invaluable monument of the "great originality of thought, and singular philosophical acuteness "with which he was accustomed to treat of such subjects in his most "careless conversations."

Now here I confess myself in want of further information from the noble editor, how the plan of a work, after being *digested in the planner's head*, and completed, would be any *monument of the originality of thought and philosophical acuteness of his most careless conversations*. If Mr. Fox had been in the habit



of writing as carelessly as in his most careless moments he conversed, and if his pen and his tongue had exactly tallied with each other, we might have some materials for the *monument*; but being a very slow and deliberate writer, I cannot clearly make out the connection between great care and no care at all, and am apt to suspect I have stumbled upon what is called a *non sequitur*.

In other words, if, after the slow process of *digestion in his head*, and so much pains as Mr. Fox was apt to take before *digestion* operated he only brought forth a *monument* to shew how acute and philosophical he could be, when he took no pains at all, I most cordially wish pains had never approached him, and that he had lived only to delight society with his *careless conversations*.

I now turn to a graver passage, which I quote from the 8th page of Lord Holland's address to the Reader, in which he says (speaking of Mr. Fox),

“ That he not only felt some repugnance to the modern practice  
“ of notes, but he thought that all, which an historian wished to say,  
“ should be introduced as part of a continued narration, and never  
“ assume the appearance of a digression, much less of a dissertation  
“ annexed to it.”

The passage perhaps is a little in confusion; but no matter—he is clear in the next page, where he says—

“ On my suggesting the example of Hume and Voltaire, who  
“ had discussed such topics at some length, either at the end of  
“ each reign, or in a separate chapter, he observed, with much commendation of their execution of it, that such a contrivance  
“ might be a good mode of writing critical essays, but that it  
“ was, in his opinion, incompatible with the nature of his undertaking, which, if it ceased to be a narrative, ceased to be a history.”

I believe opinions are not generally with Mr. Fox in this question as above stated. Many, to whose conversations on the subject I have listened with attention, have expressed themselves in favour of discussions, separated either by chapters or otherwise from the main course of the history, out of which

they arise. Some, but not so many, seem reconciled to notes.

I confess I am entirely with Mr. Fox in his reprobation of both; and first, with respect to notes, I can see no reason why the historian (but I won't confine myself to him alone) why any writer, whether essayist, biographer or other, should entangle himself with such obscure unfinished matter, as needs the illustration or amplification of a paragraph at the bottom of his page, which he has not ingenuity enough to weave into that page, or which he chuses to consider as unworthy of a place in it. I contend that he should not.

If an author cannot tell his story and recite his part from the stage, unless a prompter thrusts his head through a hole in the floor *to give him the word*, (as the phrase is) when he is puzzled, I should be apt to think him but a clumsy performer; and when I understood that he furnished those very words for that very prompter, I also should be puzzled to guess why he could not find them for himself, without his friend to back him from his oracle in the trap.

In my humble capacity as a writer (of which, in spite of its humility, I must confess I have made no sparing use) I cannot charge my conscience with a single debt that I owe to any note, auxiliary either to my prose or verse: And if I have done without that aid, what excuse can others have for resorting to it? If a feeble man can walk without a staff, I cannot understand why the strong and able hop about upon crutches, unless they hold them to be ornamental, or perhaps are too lazy to employ the limbs, that nature has bestowed upon them.

If, as I before suggested, the note or paragraph in the offing, is by the author deemed unworthy of a place in the clear stream and current of his composition, why does he not send it away and swim on without it? Why does he let it wait, like a dirty looker-on from the shore, when he is ashamed to acknowledge it as an acquaintance, yet submits to receive assistance from it as a friend?

I had almost forgot to observe upon the author, who by cer-

tain signs and symbols, hardly discernible and not always faithful, cruelly dismisses me, perhaps in the very middle of a sentence, to rummage a huge wallet of second thoughts hung to the concluding pages of his volume, like a knapsack to the soldier's back, containing little, and that little hardly worth the carriage. This is an errand, for which I have no stomach, and in which I take no pastime. I would as soon be the maker of that author's index, as sent to hunt about for dates and doubts and disputations, after I have heard his story through perhaps to the no small trial of my patience, and taken all he says for granted to the utmost stretch of my credulity.

As for separate Chapters, I object to them upon principle. They are deformities in composition, and gaps in the symmetry of a whole, that ought not to be allowed of. The characters of illustrious men, the state of society as to manners, arts and sciences within the period, through which the narrative has passed, may all, as I conceive, be woven into it on its passage, and have the good effect of lightening the heavier matter, and keeping up that chain and continuity of detail, from which the reader never should be called off, whether the retrospective chapter be more or less interesting than the progressive bulk and body of the work: For, if it be more, he will get out of humour with what he returns to; if less, he will come out of humour with what he has been employed upon.

Every work should be a whole: That whole should have uniformity; a beginning, a middle and an end; those gradations must not be put out of place; it is the reader's right to be carried forward, and the author's duty not to interrupt him by digressions from his course: Perspicuity should attend upon him through his progress; he has no time to wait for explanations, and care ought to be taken that he has no occasion for any thing to be explained. This is what true criticism will require, and what true composition will be prepared to furnish. I care little for this doctrine, as derived from Aristotle, for it is dictated by nature; and its maternal authority gives it all its value.



I will now take my leave of the noble editor, and presuming that my readers are acquainted with Mr. Fox's work, which I am about to review, solicit their attention to the remarks, I am prepared to submit to their consideration; fully aware how important and how difficult a task it is, when I undertake to examine, and perhaps to controvert opinions, stamped with such authority.

#### INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

“In reading the history of every country there are certain periods, at which the mind naturally pauses, to meditate upon and consider them, with reference, not only to their *immediate* effects, but to their *more remote* consequences.”

In the concluding words of this sentence, if there is not an error of the press, I am afraid I must charge the author with an inaccuracy, which I was not prepared to expect, and begin my criticism by exercising it upon verbal-trifles, which in any other than the opening period I should have been disposed to overlook; but Mr. Fox knew full well, that he could not speak of consequences as *more remote* than those, which were *immediate*, or, in other words, not remote at all. I must also believe that *the history of every country* (which must be an universal history) does not correctly express Mr. Fox's meaning, which seems intended to embrace, not one general history, but various histories respectively considered, such as that of Rome; for he immediately proceeds to say—

“After the wars of Marius and Sylla, and the incorporation, as it were, of all Italy with the city of Rome, *we cannot but stop* to consider the consequences likely to result from these important events; and in this instance we find them to be just such as might have been expected.”

Had Mr. Fox put the case hypothetically, and said—*If we stop to consider, we shall find so and so*—he would have put it safely; but when he says, *we cannot but stop*, I am apt to think, that, what he predicts of all may hardly have taken place in above one out of an hundred; and that the one, who did stop for recollection-sake, recollected what had come to pass,

and found it neither more nor less than his sagacity would have foreseen, if his experience in the history had not foreknown.

Upon that portion of our history, that is included within the year of the accession of Henry the Seventh to the year 1588, which is called in the margin *First Period*, Mr. Fox gives credit to

“The generally received opinion, that, to the provisions of that reign, we are to refer the origin, both of the unlimited power of the Tudors, and of the liberties wrested by our ancestors from the Stuarts.”—

He acknowledges the difficulty of foreseeing this, as tyranny was the *immediate*, and liberty the *remote* consequence. With this observation only he passes on to what is called *The Second Period*, or that, which is comprised between the years 1588 and 1640. Within this period of peace and repose Mr. Fox discerns

“Causes sufficient to produce effects of the utmost importance, and of these the most material and worthy to be considered appear to have been the frequency of debate in the House of Commons and the additional value, that came to be set on a seat in that assembly.”

Having drawn our attention to the increasing power and influence of the House of Commons, it is now that it behoves his readers to be prepared for the deductions he is about to make and the conclusions he will form upon them. He adopts the Socratic mode of argumentation, and asks—

“Will the House of Commons be content with its regular share of legislative power, or will it boldly (perhaps rashly) pretend to a power commensurate with the natural rights of the people? If it should, will it not be obliged to support its claims by military force?”

Let the reader pause upon this point—The power here spoken of, is not defined. It is commensurate with the natural rights of the people, but it must “support its claims by military force.”—Then follows the next question,

“How long will such a force be under its controul? How long before it follows the usual course of all armies, and ranges itself under a single master?”

This is bad news, but a fair warning to such gentlemen of the House of Commons (if any such there be) who are for exerting a power, commensurate to the rights of the people, by which means the people, who possess these *natural rights*, are brought to suffer most *unnatural wrongs*, and after enduring the preparatory process of a civil war, which does not leave them in a very flourishing condition, find themselves slaves to a *single master*, and in the very worst state, that human nature can be reduced to.

So much for the rights of the people; it is now time to enquire what becomes of *this man of the people*, who treats them with, what they are so richly entitled to, absolute subjection—

“Will he establish,” says our author, “an hereditary, or an elective government? If the first, what will be gained but a change of dynasty?”

That I confess is gaining a change, but whether it is gaining any thing by the change will bear a doubt—

“If the second, (viz. an elective government) “will not the military force, as it chose the first king or protector (the name is of no importance) choose in effect all his successors? or will he fail, and shall we have a restoration, usually the most dangerous and worst of all revolutions?”

What! If the usurper fail, and the hereditary rightful sovereign be restored, is there reason to denominate this the most dangerous and worst of all revolutions? Had we better live under the tyranny of the master, which the army sets over us, or of the successive masters, which the army in the wantonness of their power may think fit to elect, than suffer him to be restored, who has hereditary right to reign? If this opinion were instilled into the minds of men, would it not tend to reconcile them to anarchy, unceasing confusion and everlasting civil wars, (for such must be the natural consequences of successive army-elections) rather than to the restoration of a king, or the son of a king, whom they had once either executed or expelled? The revenge, with which a monarch so



circumstanced, would remount the throne, must be the only possible excuse for such an opinion, and in candour I will suppose it is so that Mr. Fox would have qualified his assertion. But will it bear him out? Most surely it will not. Is there not a better chance, that they, who restore a rightful king will provide laws and limitations for security of their own lives and liberties, than that any such defences should be found against a military usurper (perhaps some low-born upstart partisan) imposed upon them by the army? Is the army always one, and always in one mind? May not rival hosts set up rival pretenders, and when the sword has decided the question, who brings more revenge with him, more cruel thirst for human blood, than the elected monster of the conquering host? Certainly not the newly-restored king, who, although he may not be a real friend to mercy, will be at least so far his own friend, as to make a public display of it for popularity's sake.

This opinion, abetted by the historian, who is about to review the circumstance of King Charles's Restoration, at which it evidently points, ought not, as I conceive, to be passed over without notice. I refer it to the judgement of my readers. Much more might be urged against it, but I leave it where it is, persuaded as I am, that its palpable absurdity counteracts its otherwise pernicious tendency.

I now attend upon the author to what is styled *The Third Period*, being that between the year 1640 and the death of Charles the Second. Within this period he traces the exertions of the people, through their representatives in the house of commons,

“ For the redress of grievances, for the prevention of their recurrence, for preserving of the purse to themselves and their representatives, and for regulating the militia, so as not to leave the power of the sword altogether in the hands of an adverse party.”

With respect to their proposed regulations in regard “ to the militia,” a doubt as to the matter of right is admitted, but the prudence of doing wrong is acknowledged, “ when a contest” (aliàs a rebellion) “ was to be foreseen.”

“ The prosecution of Lord Strafford, or rather the manner, in which it was carried on, is less justifiable. He was doubtless a great delinquent, (says Mr. Fox,) and well deserved the severest punishment.”

What does Whitelocke say of Strafford? Whitelocke was chairman of that committee, which conducted the impeachment against him, and he says,

“ Never any man acted such a part, on such a theatre, with more wisdom, constancy and eloquence, with greater reason, judgment and temper, and with a better grace in all his words and actions, than did THIS GREAT AND EXCELLENT PERSON; and he moved the hearts of all his auditors, some few excepted, to remorse and pity.”

And the hearts also of all posterity I may say, *some few excepted*, of which small number I am sorry to find that Mr. Fox was one.

“ Impose not, my lords, (says Strafford in his defence) “ difficulties insurmountable upon ministers of state, nor disable them from serving with cheerfulness their king and country. If you examine them, and under such severe penalties, by every grain, by every little weight, the scrutiny will be intolerable. The public affairs of the kingdom must be left waste; and no wise man, who has any honour or fortune to lose, will ever engage himself in such dreadful, such unknown perils.”

Unhappy Strafford! though your plea could move the hearts of those, who were your persecutors, to remorse and pity, there yet is found, even in this our time, one, who, without *remorse or pity*, publishes his stern decree, and holds you up to general contempt as *well deserving the severest punishment*.

To pronounce upon a man as deserving the *severest* punishment is tantamount to saying he was the vilest criminal. That might pass in declamation from a tavern window, but ought it to be dictated from the desk of the historian? Some historians would think themselves obliged to prove it; but to say it, as it is here said, without any proof at all, certainly bears much less hard upon the memory of that distinguished person, and upon the feelings of his descendants, than if the charge were proved upon him; and Mr. Fox, by resting the fact upon his own assertion solely, has found the way, most agreeable to his

natural good-nature, of appearing to hit hard without intending to do any harm.

The chapter now proceeds to the breaking out of the civil war, which “ Lord Clarendon, and other Tory writers *intemperately* denominate a rebellion.” These *Tory writers* should all be ashamed of themselves. They don’t know how to call things by their proper names; but they are a hot-headed ill-mannered crew, and so dull of comprehension, that if they were to see the people rise up in arms and take the field against the king, they would be apt to call it by the unseemly and mistaken name of *rebellion*, when in fact it was only a harmless and amusing civil war.

Mr. Fox however (vid. p. 11.) has some doubt whether Charles the First’s parliament were quite wise in overlooking a famous passage in Tully, which some of them perhaps were not quite wise enough to have construed, had it been found out for them; yet this very passage, which would have so enlightened their understandings, if they could have understood it, is, as he assures us, the great *dictum* of that learned Roman, the whole bulk and body of which was contained, as it were, in a nut-shell, only those boobies could not crack it, and so lost the kernel, viz.

*Iniquissimam pacem justissimo bello antefero—*

the English of which is—(I construe it for the information of the ministers and their majority, hoping they will get it by heart and make a proper use of it;) *The very worst peace, that you can patch up, is preferable to the justest war, that you can persist in.* Now this excellent advice King Charles’s parliament did not follow, because they never heard it: you that are of King George’s parliament, have heard it; if you observe it not, the fault lies with you, and not with my author, whose life was devoted to peace, and now from the peaceful grave *etiam mortuus loquitur*: but perhaps you don’t understand even that; so there’s an end of the argument.

This civil-war parliament—I won’t call it a rebellious parliament, for my author tells me, that



“ According to the general principles of morality, they had justice on their side, delayed so long to accept the king’s offer as a basis for a treaty, that when they at last adopted it, the army had become their masters, and they had no power to carry it into execution.”

In other words, they would make no peace with the king so long as they could carry on the war, and when they had carried on the war till their soldiers became their masters, they were so insensible to the relative repose of their situation under the tyranny of the army, when compared with the horrors of subjection to their hereditary king, that they were even ready to rush upon a *restoration*, which my author, to guard his contemporaries from the like imprudent preference, plainly tells them, *is the most dangerous and the worst of all revolutions*. In short, whilst they could keep the king in subjection by their army, and the army under controul by their authority, all was well and the *good old cause* flourished; but when the army had become their masters, and their speaker’s mace a bawble in the grasp of Cromwell, they should have taken Tully’s *iniquissimam pacem*, which, though ever so bad, would have been better, as Mr. Fox thinks, and I agree with him in that opinion, than their most just and righteous war.

The parliament being now “ entirely influenced by Cromwell,” as my author observes, “ the execution of the king is not to be considered as the act of the said parliament, but of Cromwell; and great and respectable as are the names of some, who sate in the high court, they must be regarded, in this instance, rather as ministers of that usurper, than as acting from themselves.” (p. 13.)

Here is a paragraph, couched in terms, which I cannot pass over, and offered as an apology for certain persons, which I cannot admit. Let not terms of dignity be thus abused to the disgrace of language. Will any man, who has a reverence for truth, and a consciousness of honour, say, that to be the minister of an usurper is not to be mean? Will he say, that to sit by his orders in judgement upon the mock-trial of a fellow-creature, and condemn that fellow-creature to death, is not infamous in the extreme? And if the members, *who sate in the high court*, did this, can they be mean and infamous, yet *great and*

*respectable* at the same time? Can their servility to the usurper be at once their disgrace and their defence? Would it be a gross misnomer, and a crime against these *great and respectable* members of the high court, if I were to suspect them of being accomplices in the murder of the king, and in the *intemperance* of my tongue, like Clarendon and his Tories, venture to call them by the more moderate name of Regicides?

Mr. Fox says that “the execution of the king was a far less violent measure than that of the Lord Strafford.” Of this I am no judge; for I know not by what scale extremes can be measured with each other and compared. Greater violence to justice could hardly be done, than what he acknowledges was done by those, who sate in the high court, as *ministers of the usurper, and not as acting from themselves*. A milder term can hardly be found for the beheading of a king, than that “it was an event of a singular nature;” but a little farther on he says,

“If the republican government had suffered the king to escape, it would have been an act of justice and generosity wholly unexampled; and to have granted him even his life, would have been one among the more rare efforts of virtue.”

In other words, if they had let the king escape, and granted him both life and liberty, it would have been an act of unexampled *justice*; but even if they had spared his life only, and taken away his liberty, it would have been a rare effort of *virtue*. Of such virtue, as they were possessed of, and of none other, Mr. Fox must certainly be understood to speak; no one knew better than he, that to do justice whole and entire and without reserve, is a duty of so positive a nature, as hardly gives the name of *virtue* to the act that does it; he would not therefore have called it a rare effort of virtue, justly to have granted one half only, and unjustly to have withheld the other, had he been speaking of virtue under any other contemplation of it, than as belonging to those tools of an usurper, who condemned their sovereign to the scaffold.

Knowing this to have been Mr. Fox's respect for justice, and these his feelings for virtue, I own it is with some surprise I meet the following passage—

“ He, who has read, and still more he, who has heard in conversation discussions upon this subject by foreigners, must have perceived, that, even in the minds of those, who condemn the act, the impression made by it has been far more that of respect and admiration, than that of disgust and horror—”

It may be so; nay, I must think it is so, because Mr. Fox avers it; but I am so little versed in the works of these foreigners, and so rarely honoured with their conversation, that I will not pretend to say that this, or any other, act, *which they condemn*, may not impress them with *respect and admiration*; presupposing however that their minds, their morals and their understandings, must be terribly unhinged; which ought to have disqualified them, I should think, for being fit companions for Mr. Fox, and Mr. Fox for being the recorder in a serious work of their contemptible and senseless conversations.

If there is any elucidation of this seeming contradiction in the passage, which immediately succeeds, it is proper I should here insert it—

“ The truth is, that the guilt of the action, that is to say, the taking away the life of the king, is what most men in the place of Cromwell and his associates would have incurred; what there is of splendour and magnanimity in it, I mean the publicity and solemnity of the act, is what few would be capable of displaying.”

If the meaning of this extract is, that most men in Cromwell's place would have put the unhappy sovereign to death, but that few would have been capable of adding such publicity of insult to it, I can then understand how the *splendid* triumph of bringing a monarch to the bar, how the *magnanimous* cruelty of debasing him before the tribunal of a Serjeant Bradshaw, and the mock *solemnity* of ordering him to execution by the warrant of slaves, who had no will or judgement of their own, altogether might compose a scene, so exactly suited to the taste of certain foreigners, that, having with all due respect and admiration recollected our magnanimous mode of putting a sovereign to death, they took it for their model when they massacred their own.

Having recorded many instances of the misgovernment of the



newly-restored king, Charles the Second, though not quite enough to prove that restoration was the worst of all revolutions, forasmuch as many excellent laws were enacted, Mr. Fox, speaking of the popish plot in 1678, says,

“It is wholly inconceivable how such a plot as that brought forward by Tongue and Oates could obtain any general belief.”

Admitting however that villains may be entrusted and employed by villains, it does not always follow, that their information should be totally neglected. Amongst the numberless fictions superadded by these unprincipled wretches, I still conceive that Dryden had some ground for saying,

“Some truth there was, but dash'd and brew'd with lies.”

When the aged Lord Stafford was unjustly condemned to the scaffold, Lord Russel, who could not in his conscience have given credit to the deposition of his having proposed the murder of the king, *stickled* (as Mr. Fox expresses it) *for the severer mode of executing the horrid sentence*; and he acknowledges that Lord Russel's *fear of the king's establishing a precedent of pardoning in cases of impeachment cannot SATISFACTORILY excuse him*.—I should rather have said his severity admits of no excuse, and stamps so deep a mark upon his character, as would justify a friend of Stafford to have said, when he was brought to the block—

— “*Pallas te hoc vulnere, Pallas*

“*Immolat —*”

When Mr. Fox reprobates the cold remark of the historian Hume upon the condemnation and execution of Sydney, his reprobation is manly and his reasoning just. A darker blot in that historian's page is no where to be found; for what does he say?

“The evidence against him (Sydney) it must be confessed, was not legal; and the jury, who condemned him, were for that reason very blameable.”

The jury certainly have rendered their names infamous, and

taken the blood of Sydney on their consciences, by their verdict ; but does the *blame* (as Hume calls it) rest on them only ? For them there is some shadow of a plea ; for the prosecutors and the villain, who disgraced the bench, there is none : they, who distorted the law, knew what the law was ; the jury might be puzzled by their quirks—Hume goes on to say—

“ But that after sentence passed by a court of judicature,  
“ the king should interpose and pardon a man, who, though  
“ otherwise possessed of merit, was undoubtedly guilty, who  
“ had ever been a most inflexible and most inveterate enemy  
“ to the royal family, and who lately had abused the King’s  
“ clemency, might be an act of heroic generosity, but can  
“ never be regarded as a necessary and indispensable duty.”—

What kind of reasoning is this ? where did Mr. Hume find out that to do justice to an enemy is a duty, that may be dispensed with ? It is fatally too often that evil men find an advocate for injustice and revenge in their own bosoms, but it is rarely they can meet an apologist in a succeeding age, like Mr. Hume, to justify such flagrant violation of most sacred duties. Christianity at once puts this apology to silence ; but that is an authority I greatly fear, to which the apologist paid small respect. Let this be one amongst the many instances I could adduce how infinitely weak all human reasoning is, when arguing against truths, divinely dictated, and mercifully revealed for our salvation.

Mr. Fox dilates upon the Oxford decree, and the expulsion of Mr. Locke from Christ Church quite as much as the incident will bear, and I perfectly agree with the Edinburgh reviewers, that Dogberry and Verges in *Much Ado about Nothing* have nothing to do with the case in question, and should not have been taken from a station, where they act in character, to be placed in one, where they have no character to act.

In 1685, Charles the Second resigned that life, which he had so unworthily employed, and that power, which he had so egregiously misused. Many suspected that he was poisoned, and

this suspicion seems to have been entertained by the Duchess of Portsmouth, who was great-grandmother to Mr. Fox's mother; but it appears to him to rest upon very slender foundations. He sums up Charles's character with little variation from the manner of Mr. Hume; but history does that and stamps him as a man, abandoned to his vices and devoid of principle. Mr. Fox says he was *gay and affable*, and that *the praise of politeness, which the Stoics class amongst the moral virtues, has never been denied him*—We may let this pass in compliment to the Stoics, though what they have to do with the moral virtues of a Christian King I do not understand, and rather think they come in here like Dogberry and Verges in another place—

“He had,” —according to Mr. Fox's character of him—  
 “in an eminent degree, that facility of temper, which, though  
 “considered by some moralists as nearly allied to vice, yet, inas-  
 “much as it contributes greatly to the happiness of those around  
 “us, is, in itself, not only an engaging, but an estimable quality.”

Although the *Moralists*, here alluded to, do not seem to have been Stoics, but only Christians, I should still suspect that this facility of Charles's temper had that very *alliance*, which these moralists are disposed to reprobate, his Majesty's vices being so very many, and his virtues so extremely few: That it was not a facility towards mercy, has been clearly proved; that it was a facility towards his mistresses, appears in the same page, and it is set down as the best part of his character, not indeed by these aforesaid moralists, but by Mr. Fox, who considers this facility of temper, notwithstanding its *alliance* to vice in the persons of the Duchess of Portsmouth and Nell Gwyn, to have been *not only an engaging, but an estimable, quality*. This more plainly appears in the following paragraph—

“Charles's connection with those ladies [abovementioned]  
 “*might be vicious*” (there is indeed some ground for that suspi-  
 “cion), “but at a moment, when that connection was upon the  
 “point of being finally and irrevocably dissolved, to concern him-



“self about their future welfare, and to recommend them to his brother with earnest tenderness, WAS VIRTUE.”

This is not the first time I have been puzzled to comprehend what Mr. Fox exactly means when he speaks of *virtue*. I suspect there is something in it of the Greek philosophy modernized, and manufactured into French morality, else I think it would not have fitted the case of Charles upon his death-bed, where, instead of repenting of his adulteries, he seems to have employed his last moments in recommending his adulteresses : And this we are told is *Virtue*.

He had signed away the lives of Russel and of Sydney by a murderous warrant. This would have troubled some men's consciences, and extorted from them symptoms of remorse for the evil they had done : Charles's *Virtue* was superior to these feelings, and when his royal brother attended to receive and reverently entertain his last injunctions at that awful crisis, James, who perhaps expected to be charged with masses for his soul, heard of nothing but of a provision for Nell Gwynn and for the other more ennobled mistress ; the dying King *with earnest tenderness* recommending them to his care, generously taking much concern about *their future welfare*, and absolutely none about his own. He went out of the world, forgetting himself, his country and his God, and it is ascribed to him as a *virtue*, that he remembered his mistresses.

What I may have further to remark upon what Mr. Fox has further written, I reserve for the succeeding number.

RICHARD CUMBERLAND.

A NEW SYSTEM OF DOMESTIC COOKERY, FORMED UPON PRINCIPLES OF ECONOMY, AND ADAPTED TO THE USE OF PRIVATE FAMILIES. BY A LADY.—*A new edition, corrected. London, printed for John Murray, Fleet Street; J. Harding, St. James's Street; and A. Constable and Co. Edinburgh. 7s. 6d.*

THE three booksellers to whom the world is indebted for this ingenious Treatise on the Art of Eating and Drinking, could not have been more happily marshalled by a king at arms, than they are in the title-page of this work. Mr. John Murray lives within the city walls, and is, upon that account, *positively* the best judge of cookery. Mr. J. Harding, of a more courtly residence, may *comparatively* possess some knowledge of the subject; but Messrs. A. Constable and Co. of Edinburgh, must be pronounced, by all impartial judges, *superlatively* unfit to give evidence in the cause. A work which treats of oyster patties, green peas, ratafea cream, and London syllabub, must be as much a “sealed book” to our Scottish neighbours, as that northern luminary Allan Ramsay is to us darkling natives of the south. The only effect which it can produce in the shop window of the aforesaid A. Constable and Co. is to quicken their countrymen in their journey southward, (like the hay before the horse’s nose in Ireland) and thus to overcome that bashful repugnance to visiting England which has ever been the characteristic of a North Briton. But, as a striking title is half the battle, ought not our authoress, in policy, to have intitled her book, “The Belly and the Members,” and dedicated it to our Representatives in Parliament? This would have established her fame in a moment, and consigned old Menenius Agrippa’s fable of that name to merited oblivion. The great object of the great mass of mankind, *docti indoctique*, is to eat. From the savage of Terra del Fuego, whose food is worms extracted from decayed wood, to the Peripatetic of Bond Street,

who, having performed the duties of the morning, regales on turtle and iced champagne; and, while he picks his teeth, eyes with disdain the ignoble herd through the green lattices of Steevens's Hotel, it may be stated, as an indisputable fact, that man is a cooking animal, and increases in civilization in proportion to the beauty and variety of the produce of his saucepans. The degeneracy of the Jew may, upon this principle, be fairly ascribed to the train-oil that meanders through his viands. The debased condition of the Negro may safely be imputed to the Yams and Cassava which he dignifies with the name of dinner; and what political efforts can this country ever expect from the Dutch, when we reflect that they jumble bacon and butter-milk in the same dish, and feed upon cheeses, which can only be compared to cannon-balls impregnated with salt? Homer's poetical proser, Old Nestor, considered man a cooking animal; so thought the renowned James Boswell, that twinkling star in the great belt of the *Saturnine* Moralist; and the observation enabled Mr. Burke to account for the old proverb—'There's reason in roasting of eggs. With this great truth in view, how much obliged ought the public to feel to a lady who, instead of inditing Sonnets to the Moon, and feeding the mind of her readers through the medium of the Minerva press, has preferred the more laudable pursuit of catering for the stomach, and has produced a work, at which the Hannah Glasses and the Farleys may hide their diminished larders. Half an author's merit arises from the choice of his subject. A new system of religion was out of the question; no *sober* man now thinks of going any where except to the Tabernacle; and systems of politics are as shifting as the sands of Scamander under the foot of Achilles. An improved treatise on music, or dancing, might indeed have made many proselytes in this fiddling and jumping age; yet, still the deaf and the gouty would not have become purchasers. But a new System of Cookery, embracing all the contents of the table-cloth, *ab ovo usque ad mala*, is universally and perpetually interesting. When a superannuated general is fight-



ing his battles over again, and in his narrative cuts off the wing of an army, one is apt to yawn. How different the sensation if he is cutting off the wing of a wild fowl. John Duke of Argyll was a great man in his day: he is now *hors de combat* in Westminster Abbey; and I entreat the noble family of Campbell to reflect, that the *Argyll* which saves gravy from coagulating, is the golden urn that shall long preserve the ashes of their illustrious house from oblivion. The Duke is now cold, but our gravy is hot. Who does not remember Queen Catharine's character of Cardinal Wolsey?

He was a man

*Of an unbounded stomach, ever ranking  
Himself with princes.*

My interpretation of this passage, with all due deference to Mr. Douce, is, that he was a man who gave *excellent dinners*. Allow me this, and the enigma of his "ranking himself with princes" is instantly solved. We will not, however, multiply cases to prove a self-evident proposition, but proceed to the work under review; which is introduced by an advertisement, wherein we are informed, that "the following directions were intended for the conduct of the families of the authoress's own daughters, and for the arrangement of their table." But the young ladies, I suppose, being unable to decypher their mamma's cramp manuscript, or, as puddings and pies were the subject of her pen, "obliged by *hunger* and request of friends," she has consented to roll into the world in the puff-paste shape of a thick duodecimo. "How rarely," exclaims our authoress, in a pathetic tone, "do we meet with fine melted butter!" This calamity was not overlooked by our immortal bard, whose Moor of Venice bewails his want of that article with tears.

Unused to the *melting mood*,  
Dropt tears as fast as the Arabian trees  
Their medicinal gums.

And now, reader, having dispatched the Advertisement,

we enter into the vestibule of the temple, the Preface, consisting of "Miscellaneous Observations for the use of the Mistress of a Family." It is a good old custom with the race that write, to consider the topic under their immediate discussion, as the most important subject of inquiry that can agitate the feelings of man. Mrs. Barbauld promotes Richardson, without any remorse, over the head of poor Fielding; and Mr. Hayley would fain make his mole-hill Cowper over-top Mount Milton. If an author does not appear in earnest, it is all over with him. "How the deuce can you expect me to grieve, (says Horace,) if you don't appear to grieve yourself?" The authoress of Domestic Cookery was aware of this rule, when she introduced her Miscellaneous Observations with a sentence which the hero of Bolt-court himself might not have blushed to pen :

"In every rank those deserve the greatest praise who best  
"acquit themselves of the duties which their station requires.  
"Indeed, this line of conduct is not a matter of choice but of  
"necessity, if we would maintain the dignity of our own charac-  
"ters as rational beings."

When I had proceeded thus far, I hastily turned the leaves, fearing that I had, by mistake, dipped into the Rambler; but happening to alight upon a green goose pie, and knowing that the sage had never discussed that topic, I returned to the preface. Our heroine of jams and jellies thus proceeds.

"In the variety of female acquirements, though domestic occu-  
"pations stand not so high as they formerly did, yet when  
"neglected, they produce much *human misery*. [*Here sighs a jar.*] There was a time when ladies knew nothing *beyond* their  
"own family concerns. [*Here a goose-pie talks.*] But in the  
"present day there are many who know nothing *about* them."

Ah, madam, this is a sober truth, though epigrammatically expressed. But, under favour, is it not something like the

conceited cook, in the fragment of the Greek comic poet Straton, who says to his master—

*What! I speak as Homer does ;  
And sure a cook may use like privilege,  
And more than a blind poet.*

But mark the surly answer of the cook's master—

*Not with me:  
I'll have no kitchen Homers in my house ;  
So, pray, discharge yourself.*

The Lady Bountifuls have, I confess, quitted the stage, and the Lady Townleys reign in their stead. Who now is so brutal as to expect, that those delicate fingers which, when employed on the piano-forte, emulate in whiteness the keys they rattle, shall be degraded to crack the claw of a lobster, or squeeze reluctant pickles into a jar? Even in the days of Pope, it was one of the many subjects of complaint of that irritable bard, that

*Our wives read Milton, and our daughters plays.*

And though, in the sixty-four years which have elapsed since his death, our wives may have changed their course of reading, yet it may be doubted, whether they are a whit more wedded to the kitchen than heretofore. The German Mrs. Haller is represented in a mob-cap, with a bunch of keys at her girdle, the keeper of the paradise of pastry; but Mrs. Siddons decorates that frail lady with long drapery, and a yellow muslin turban. Fashion, however, will do much, and as our authoress's *Domestic Cookery* is universally read, let us hope that the modes of life will change, and that it will be as much the rage to stay at home to save money, as it now is to go abroad to spend it.

Our fair purveyor of patty-pans is gifted with that variety



of style which, like her own recipes, is calculated to please all palates.

*Milton's strong pinions now not Heaven can bound,  
Now serpent-like, in prose, he sweeps the ground.*

She informs us, that “ to make home the sweet refuge of a husband fatigued by intercourse with a jarring world, to be his enlightened companion and the chosen friend of his heart, these these are woman’s duties ;” and adds, in the same breath, “ candles made in cool weather are best.” The reader is no sooner apprised that “ a pious woman will build up her house before God,” than he is told “ the price of starch depends upon that of flour.” Talents here find themselves placed in the same sentence with treacle; custards are coupled with conjugal fidelity, and moral duties with macaroni. This obliquity of pen, “ one eye on earth, the other fixed on heaven,” is the only sure mode of pleasing all readers. It forms the genuine hill and dale of style, and when bounded by a modern meadow of margin, bids fair to circulate through ten editions.

And now, reader, prepare yourself for a lecture on *carving*. “ Some people (says our authoress) *haggle* meat so much, as “ not to be able to help half a dozen persons decently from a “ large tongue or a surloin of beef; and the *dish* goes away “ with the appearance of having been gnawed by dogs.” Most dogs that have come under my cognizance, would be better pleased to gnaw the *meat* than the *dish*; but putting that aside, it must be allowed to be a monstrous thing for the seventh expectant, to be watching for a slice from a surloin which is destined to be wasted on six persons! Our lady, however, must in this instance be considered, as rather hypercritical, few persons being so uninitiated in the mysteries of the blade, as to be unable to carve a tongue or a surloin: But to be placed opposite to a pig, a goose, or a hare, and to

possess no more skill in the art than the executioner of the Duke of Monmouth, is indeed one of the miseries of human life. I most sincerely wish I could transplant these dainties to the pages of this Review, but, since that cannot be, let me at least do all I can by extracting the rules for dissecting them.

“*Sucking Pig.*—The cook usually decorates the body before it is sent to table, and garnishes the dish with the jaws and ears.” If she do not, she deserves to lose her own ears. “The first thing is to separate a shoulder from the carcase on one side, and then the leg according to the directions given by the dotted line *a, b, c*. The ribs are then to be divided into about two *helpings*, and an ear or a jaw presented with them, and *plenty of sauce*. The joints may either be divided into two each, or pieces may be cut from them. The ribs are reckoned the finest part, but some people prefer the neck-end between the shoulders.” Here is a difference of opinion between all people and some people, which is left to the arbitration of other people.

“*Goose.*—Cut off the apron in the circular line *a, b, c*, in the figure opposite the last page, and pour into the body a glass of Port wine and a large tea-spoonful of mustard, first mixed at the side-board. Turn the neck of the goose towards you, and cut the whole breast in long slices from one wing to another; but only remove them as you help each person, unless the company is so large as to require the legs likewise.” And if the eaters are so many, woe betide the goose; there will be nothing left of it for the next day. “This way gives more prime bits than by making wings. Take off the leg by putting the fork into the small end of the bone, passing it to the body, and having passed the knife at *d*, turn the leg back, and, if a young bird, it will easily separate.” Let our army and navy surgeons take notice that this instruction is not meant for them. “To take off the wing, put your fork into the small end of the pinion, and press it close to the body; then put in the knife at *d*, and divide the joint, taking it down in the direction *d, e*. Nothing but practice will enable people to hit the joint exactly at the first trial.\* When the leg and wing of one side are done, go on to the other; but it is not often necessary to cut up the whole goose, unless the company be very large. There are two

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\* The clear meaning of this remark is, that, if you are perfected by practice, you will *hit the joint exactly at the first trial*, though you never tried before.

“ side-bones by the wing, which may be cut off, as likewise the  
“ back and lower side-bones: but the best pieces are the breast  
“ and the thighs after being divided from the drum-sticks.”

“ *Hare.*—The best way of cutting it up, is to put the point of  
“ the knife under the shoulder at *a*, in the figure opposite the next  
“ page, and so cut all the way down to the rump on one side of  
“ the back-bone, in the line *a, b*. Do the same on the other side,  
“ so that the whole hare will be divided into three parts. Cut  
“ the back part into four, which, with the legs, is the part most  
“ esteemed. The shoulders must be cut off in a circular line, as  
“ *c, d, a*: lay the pieces neatly on the dish as you cut them, and  
“ then help the company, giving some pudding and gravy to every  
“ person.\* This way can only be practised when the hare is  
“ young: if old, don’t divide it down, which will require a strong  
“ arm,” a sly hint at the weakness of her readers, “ but put the  
“ knife between the leg and back, and give it a little turn inwards  
“ at the joint, which you must endeavour to hit and not to break  
“ by force. When both legs are taken off, there is a *fine collop*  
“ on each side the back;” we all love a slice from poor puss;—  
This is indeed the hare and many friends; “ then divide the back  
“ into as many pieces as you please, and take off the shoulders,  
“ which are by many preferred, and are called the sportsman’s  
“ pieces.† When every one is helped, cut off the head,” and take  
it to yourself, “ put your knife between the upper and lower jaw,  
“ and divide them, which will enable you to lay the upper flat on  
“ your plate, then put the point of the knife into the centre,  
“ and cut the head in two. The *ears* and *brains* may be helped  
“ then to those who like them.”

By the way, the same individual has seldom a penchant for  
*both*. Our noble patronizers of the Italian Opera have nice  
ears and no brains, and many a sinister limb of the law has a  
plentiful stock of brains and no ears.

Here is a body of rules, scientifically laid down, like the  
figure of a country dance, by right and left, leading out sides, and

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\* The impartiality of this hospitable lady, in giving *pudding* to  
every person, whether they like it or like it not, is truly amiable,  
and of a piece with that species of boarding-school benevolence which  
places pudding as a grace before meat, and obliges the young  
student to wade through a slough of rice or suet, before he can  
revel in the joys of beef or mutton.

† A hint from Horace—viz.

*Sapiens sectabitur armos.*

By which we learn that *SAPIENS* is Latin for a *sportsman*.



galloping down the middle, by the study of which the enlightened reader, when a goose or hare is before him,

*May CARVE it like a dish fit for the gods,  
Not hew it like a carcase for the hounds.*

It is to be feared, however, that this to many readers is all Algebra, without the aid of the dotted engravings, which, by the way, are so badly executed, that it may be safely said, never were such good dinners served up on such indifferent plates. To those however who do comprehend them, the utility of the above extracts is too obvious to render any apology necessary; and would to propriety that certain ladies and gentlemen would take their degrees in this culinary college ere they pretend to carve for themselves! "Can none remember, yes I know all must," some one of his acquaintance, whose zeal to do the honours of the table is as intense as that of a missionary to visit the coast of Africa, and who is about as well skilled in the science he professes to teach? Give such a man the hundred hands of Briareus, and he would gladly dissect a whole city feast at a single sitting. With a generosity peculiar to himself, he dispenses the gravy over the faces and waistcoats of his fellow guests, leaving the poor goose or duck as dry as a Scotch metaphysical essay. When a man of this stamp thrusts his fork into the breast of a woodcock, the company present express as much alarm as if the bird were alive.—Let no such man be trusted. What a fine subject for a didactic poem is *carving*! What is Mr. Godwin about? It is well known he addresses his writs to the late Sheriff of London, who, upon such an occasion, would doubtless usher the bantling to light. It is true the worthy knight eats no meat himself, since he eat up the heifer; but is that a reason why he should be unmindful of those that do?

But, as humanity is the brightest jewel in a lady's tiara, it grieves me to be obliged to reprehend in the most unqualified

terms, the following receipt to make hare soup—page 104 :  
“ Take an old hare that is good for nothing else, cut it into  
“ pieces,” &c. Fie, madam, are these your fine feelings?  
Sterne, who wept over a dead jack-ass, like any sandman,  
would never have forgiven you. Mr. Southey, mounted on  
old Poulter’s mare, will *vilipend* you through a whole *Thalaba*.  
Is this your respect for age? Suppose some giant of the  
Monk Lewis breed, having a penchant for human flesh, were  
to seize you in his paws, and utter this culinary dictum :  
“ Take an *old woman* that is good for nothing else, cut her  
into pieces, &c.” Gentle lady, would you like to be served  
so yourself?

“ Order is heaven’s first law,” quoth the Poet of Reason ;  
and as good eating is a heaven on earth to so many respectable  
natives of London, it can excite no surprise that our dictatrix  
from the pantry has prefixed to her work an ample and well-  
arranged table of contents, dividing her subject into thirteen  
parts, embracing every dainty that can tickle the human  
palate. She commences with the scaly tenants of the flood,  
and ends with receipts to prevent hay from firing, to wash old  
deeds, to preserve a head of hair, and to dye gloves to look  
like York tan or Limerick. What an excursive fancy are  
some ladies blessed with ! A limb of the law might call the  
latter part of this division *travelling out of the record*, but  
surely without due consideration.—*Tempus EDAX rerum*, is  
a precept, old as the hills. Now as it is well known that  
the old gentleman will now and then nibble a lady’s glove,  
“ then her flowing hair,” or gnaw the title-deeds of her  
husband’s estate, why should not his food be treated of as  
well as ours ? Nor let any carping critic condemn her dis-  
sertation on home-brewery and sauces as too prolix. The  
evils that spring from inattention to these articles are more  
numerous than the woes that sprang from the wrath of the son  
of Peleus. I will not repeat the well-known catastrophe at  
Salt-hill ; Death, in that case, was a welcome visitor to snatch

eight unfortunate gentlemen from the calamity of an ill-cooked repast. But I will put it to the recollection of the majority of my readers, whether they are not in the habit of dining with some individual, whom Nature seems to have manufactured without a palate. If you ask the footman of such an unhappy being for bread, you receive something possessing the consistence of a stone. His turbot has all the dignity of age, his Port wine all the fire of youth. With an anxious fore-finger and a disappointed thumb, you turn up his fish-cruets one by one, and find that they resemble the pitchers of the Belides. His Champagne is a co-partnership of tar-water and treacle, and his lobster-sauce is so alarmingly congealed as to be fitter for Salmon's wax-work than for salmon! These these are the trials of human fortitude! Talk of Job scolded by his wife, or Cato pent up in Utica—psha! How different the taste and the establishment of the renowned Decius! He is an assiduous frequenter of the Tabernacle, where he ponders on the joys to come—when the dinner hour arrives. His thoughts are revolving, not on the new birth, but on the new spit, which kindly roasts his venison without wounding it. If the afternoon service happen to extend beyond the usual period, then may Decius be seen to issue from his pew, like the lioness from her den. Not having the fear of repletion before his eyes, but moved and instigated by an over-roasted haunch, he darts through the aisle, and knocks down the intervening babes of grace like so many piping nine-pins.

Such is the laudable zeal of a man whose ruling passion floats in a tureen of mock turtle, and yet, so unsatisfactory are all sublunary enjoyments, it may sometimes be doubted whether the rearing of such costly pyramids of food be worth the founder's trouble. Goldsmith somewhere expresses a strong objection to two thousand pounds a year, because they will not procure a man two appetites; and another starveling son of the Muses, in his fable of the Court of Death, seems to insinuate, that intemperance may in time injure the con-



stitution. Certain it is, that three deadly foes to the disciple of Epicurus, intitled Plethora, Apoplexy, and bilious Gout, are often found to lie *perdu* beneath a masked battery of French paste, and, crossing the course of the voluptuary, like the weird sisters in the path of the benighted Thane, so annoy him, even when seated on that throne of human felicity, a tavern-chair, as to make it a moot point whether it was worth his while to wade through the blood of so many animals to attain it.

Mark what Alixis, a Greek Poet, says :—

*Oh, that Nature*

*Might quit us of this over-bearing burthen,  
This tyrant god, the belly ! Take that from us,  
With all its bestial appetites, and man,  
Exonerated man, shall be all soul.*

A truce, however, to these unpalatable reflections, and let us revert to more agreeable topics. The due arrangement of a dinner-table is not so easy a matter as some folks imagine. Every one recollects the anecdote of the Gray's-Inn Student, who entertained his guests, consisting of two pining old maids and a bilious nabob, with boiled tripe at top, boiled tripe at bottom, and a round of beef, garnished with parsnips, in the centre. Any man possessed of money, may give a dinner, but, to give a proper one, requires both taste and fancy ; and as those two ingredients are not always discernible in the *tout ensemble* of a son of Plutus, our authoress has kindly supplied their place, by inventing a scale of dinners suited to all pockets ; loading the stomachs of her readers, as Lockit clogged the ankles of his customers, with fetters of all prices, from one guinea to ten. An abridgment of this part of the work could only have the effect of lopping off its merits ; I shall content myself, therefore, with touching the two ex-

tremes; extracting, in the first place, that sort of plain family-dinner which a man produces when he means to treat you like a *friend*, though, alas! it has more the appearance of treating you like an *enemy*; and, in the next place, I shall lay before my readers a collection of good things, which might compose a Lord Mayor's feast, worthy to be given by the late to the present incumbent.

*Five Dishes.*

	Knuckle of Veal, stewed with Rice.	
Apple Sauce.	Bread and Butter Pudding.	Potatoes.
	Loin of Pork roasted.	

A very indifferent repast, at all events; but take heed to the roasting of your pork, for *Tom Browne*, of facetious memory, made a dinner for the devil, in which he gave him under-done pork for his top dish.

*Long Table once covered.*

	Fish.	
Fruit Tart	One Turkey, or two Poults.	Blanc-mange.
	Mock Turtle Soup.	Sweetbreads larded.
Harico.		
Mash Turnips.	Jerusalem Artichocks fricasseed.	Stewed Spinach.
Carrots thick round.		
Cray Fish.	Savory Cake.	Dried Salmon, in papers.
	Macaroni Pudding.	
Ham bruised.	Trifle.	Chickens.
	French Pie.	
Casserole of Rice, with Giblets.	Stewed Celery.	Picked Crab.
Fricandeau.	Apple Pie and Custard.	Ox Rumps and Spanish Onions.
Jelly form.	Rich white Soup.	Cheesecakes.
	Fish.	

(Remove—Venison, or Loin of Veal.)

It is now time to close the present article, for the length of which, nothing but the extreme importance of the subject can atone. With a trembling pen, I have ventured to touch upon the science of luxurious eating, of which, it must be confessed, my knowledge is derived rather from theory than practice, and in which, therefore, it is highly probable I have committed some mistakes. Shades of Apicius, Darteneuf, and Quin, forgive me if I have erred! Our journey, gentle reader, has been through a delightful country, recalling to our recollection the juvenile tale of Miranda, or the Royal Ram; inasmuch as we are credibly informed, that the air within the blissful domains of that woolly potentate, was darkened with showers of tarts and cheese-cakes. Let me entreat thee to repair, without loss of time, to the shop of Mr. John Murray, of Fleet Street, where, for seven shillings and sixpence, thou mayest purchase the work of which I have furnished thee with a sort of hashed analysis. Then, if thou art a man of taste, thou wilt order a dainty repast, after the fashion of one of those enumerated within the precincts of pages 312 and 320; and then, when thy envious covers are snatched off by a skilful domestic, and a steam ascends which might gratify the nose of Jove himself, and make him lean from Olympus to smell, I hope thou wilt, as in duty bound, exclaim in the words of the pious King Cymbeline—

Laud we the gods,  
And let the crooked smoak climb to their nostrils  
From our blest altars.



THE WORKS OF JOHN DRYDEN; NOW FIRST COLLECTED IN EIGHTEEN VOLUMES, ILLUSTRATED WITH NOTES, HISTORICAL, CRITICAL, AND EXPLANATORY; AND A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR. BY WALTER SCOTT, ESQ. *London, Miller, Albemarle Street.* 18 vols. 8vo. 9l. 9s.; and royal 8vo. 12l. 12s.

It behoves every writer who undertakes any work of consequence, to attend to the admonition of the Roman Poet and Critic:

“ Sumite materiam vestris qui scribitis æquam  
Viribus, et versate diù quid ferre recusent,  
Quid valeant humeri.”

Weigh well your burthen, Writers, and compare  
Its weight with your ability to bear.

Dr. Warton, who undertook to perform the same office for Pope which Mr. Scott has executed for his master Dryden, notwithstanding his acknowledged excellence in every branch of classical literature, was singularly ill qualified for the task, both from his strong predilection for the Italian school, in opposition to that which he calls the school of Boileau, and the age of Lewis XIV., but which, if we must adopt the technical phrase of a sister art, may be more properly called the school of Dryden, of Horace and Virgil, and the Augustan age; and his strong prejudice against rhyme, and in favour of blank-verse, a prejudice which carries him so far as to propose a translation of the Satires and Epistles in that loose blank-verse, which Mr. Colman very properly employed in his Terence.

From the species of poetry in which Mr. Scott has so much distinguished himself, our first impression would not be in his favour, as a commentator on Dryden; but the execution of the plan by no means justifies such impression; and the scale

between rhymed and unrhymed verses is held with an impartiality that is not very common, as the comparative excellence of each is generally discussed with a warmth which more resembles the violence of party than the coolness of candid criticism. In the examination of this voluminous publication, though there will be something to censure, there will be much to praise. It is impossible to give any thing like an analysis of a work which consists of notes, on detached parts, of a very diffusive writer. There is, however, one violation of the *lucidus ordo*, which might easily have been avoided, and which is inconvenient to the reader, and singularly so to the reviewer. In the introductory volume, but which appears obviously to have been written after the others \*, Mr. Scott has very properly traced the successive progress of the merit of Dryden's Dramas, in the order in which they appeared; and, to do this effectually, he has given a sketch of the faults and the merits of each; but the same kind of sketch he has (or rather had) prefixed to each play. Now if the author had confined all his general remarks to the introductory volume, and allotted his notes on each play to particular parts only, much repetition, and some confusion, would have been avoided.

This will be attempted in the review of the work, as it proceeds, confining all the general, as well as partial criticism, to the place where the play is the peculiar object of it. To proceed now, with such observations as occur in the perusal of the work, (the only way in which such a work can be analysed,) the following remark on the comparative merit of Shakspeare and his contemporary Poets, is the first and striking object.

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\* "Having offered some observations elsewhere on this play, I need not resume the subject." Vol. I. page 222.  
 "Without repeating the remarks which are prefixed to the play in the present edition." Ibid. page 228.

“ When James I. ascended the throne of England, Shakspeare  
 “ was in the zenith of his reputation, and England possessed *other*  
 “ *Poets, inferior to Shakspeare alone*; or, indeed, the higher  
 “ order of whose plays may claim to be ranked above the inferior  
 “ dramas *ascribed* to him; among these we may reckon Massinger,  
 “ who approached to Shakspeare in dignity, and Beaumont and  
 “ Fletcher, who *surpassed him in drawing female characters*,  
 “ and those of polite and courtly life.” Vol. I. page 3.

Every person who lays down an hypothesis, either moral, critical, or political, should consider how far the premises, if followed, must lead him. Is Mr. Scott aware, when he considers where Shakspeare must be placed in the scale of general poetical merit, how very unfit either of the other Poets he has mentioned are to stand—not by his side, but even within sight of him? Because the nature of our early drama, the constitution of the fable, and the idiom of the language, threw a general colour over all the contemporary theatrical Poets, nothing can be more absurd than to draw parallels between Massinger, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Shakspeare, as to poetical merit, from any resemblance arising out of such circumstances.

How far some of the dramas of the first-mentioned poets may be superior to some of the plays *ascribed* to Shakspeare, such, for instance, as *Titus Andronicus*, and *Pericles*, is not worth the trouble of examining; neither are the pains their commentators have taken, in comparing detached passages, of more consequence.

How far Beaumont and Fletcher excelled Shakspeare in the *delineation of female characters*, let those determine who will compare the chaste Evanthe, as she is called in *The Wife for a Month*, who utters, in the plainest terms, the sentiments of Paulo Purgante's wife, the abandoned strumpet, who is the heroine of *The Maid's Tragedy*, (for poor Aspasia is quite in the back ground,) or those precious pair of females, Margaretta and Estifania, in that pleasant Comedy, *Rule a Wife and have a Wife*, with Imogen and Viola, with Beatrice and Rosalind. The praise of drawing the manners of polite and



courtly life, may perhaps be just ; for the best practical dramatic critic that ever lived, Garrick\*, used to say, that every thing might be found in Beaumont and Fletcher, but nature.

In the succeeding page is a remark that certainly merits unqualified approbation, as pointing out the only mode by which the public may again be made the sole judge of dramatic talent, and good compositions not be withheld by the partiality of the manager, or buffoonery and immorality forced on the town by the arts of the mechanist and scene-painter.

“ I do not (Mr. Scott says) pretend to enter into the question of the effect of the drama upon morals.—If this shall be found prejudicial, two theatres are too many ; but the monopoly granted to two huge theatres, must necessarily diminish, in a complicated ratio, both the number of play-writers and the chance of any thing very excellent being brought forward.”

The absurdity of classing Poets with each other, was surely never carried to so ridiculous an excess as in the curious extract from a composition of the Honourable Edward Howard, cited in this work, Vol. I. page 100.

“ The two elaborate Poems of Blackmore and Milton, the which, for the dignity of them, may very well be reckoned as the two grand examples of poetry, do either of them exceed, and are more to be valued, than all the Poets both of the Romans and the Greeks put together.”

*Cedite, Romani Scriptores ; cedite, Graii.*

‘ When thus misjudging, blundering Howard says,

‘ He censures even Blackmore by his praise.’

After censuring the extravagance of the heroic play so much in fashion when Dryden commenced his dramatic career, Mr. Scott makes this very judicious observation :

“ Although the manners were preposterous, and the changes of

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\* This anecdote came from the Rev. Dr. Hoadly, brother to the author of *The Suspicious Husband*.—*Reviewer*.

“ fortune rapid and improbable, yet the former often attained a  
 “ sublime, though forced, elevation of sentiment; and the latter,  
 “ by rapidity of transition, and of contrast, served in no slight  
 “ degree to interest as well as to surprise the audience. If the  
 “ spectators were occasionally stunned with bombast, or hurried  
 “ and confused by the accumulation of action and intrigue, they  
 “ escaped the languor of a creeping dialogue, and the tædium of a  
 “ barren plot, of which the termination is descried full three acts  
 “ before it can be attained.” Vol. I. page 128.

The use of hexameter, which occurs first in Vol. I. page 180, for our heroic and dramatic verse, which, if we must give ancient names to modern things, is obviously a pentameter, is truly astonishing; for it is impossible to suppose Mr. Scott so ignorant of the etymology of hexameter as not to know that it can only mean a verse of six feet, which can never be applicable to a verse of ten syllables; the only verse in our language to which the word hexameter can be applied, is the Alexandrine; of which verse Mr. Scott, in another place, says (see Vol. XV. page 438.) that it is only the common ballad stanza of *Chevy Chace*, written in two lines at length, instead of being subdivided into four. Now every verse in *Chevy Chace*, so written, would consist of fourteen syllables. It is curious enough, that, in this identical page, Dryden calls the Alexandrine a verse of six feet \*.

Mr. Scott's opinion of interweaving comic and tragic effect, is so excellently expressed, that, would the limits of the Review admit it, consistently with the variety of objects which this article must necessarily comprehend, it would be desirable to insert the whole of it. The following extract is, however, selected.

After deprecating the old custom of having two distinct plots, one comic, the other tragic, as in the *Spanish Friar*, and mentioning the introduction of comic character in the

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\* And yet in this Volume, page 486, we find this passage:—  
 “ To vary the English *hexameter*, he established the use of the  
 “ triplet and Alexandrine.”

subordinate parts, like Mercutio, as a better mode, the author adds—

“ There is, however, another mode, yet more difficult to be  
“ used with address, but much more fortunate in effect, when it has  
“ been successfully employed. This is when the principal person-  
“ ages themselves do not always remain in the buckram of Tra-  
“ gedy, but reserve, as in common life, lofty expressions for great  
“ occasions; and at other times, evince themselves capable of  
“ feeling the lighter as well as the more violent or more deep affec-  
“ tions of the mind. The shades of comic humour in Hamlet, in  
“ Hotspur, and in Falconbridge\*, are so far from injuring, that  
“ they greatly aid the effect of the tragic scenes, in which these  
“ persons take a deep and *tragic* concern.” Vol. I. page 231.

But, alas! we can have little hopes of seeing such characters again in perfection, till we have another Shakspeare to write them, and another Garrick to perform them, and theatres where an actor can be heard without exceeding the natural compass of his voice.

The excuse for Dryden's embracing the tenets of the Church of Rome, from the notion that a man, who had never had any religion, might naturally adhere to that on which he first turned his attention, is plausible enough; but what connexion can this have with Gibbon, whose name is brought in as an illustration; as Gibbon was converted to Popery at a very early age, not from scepticism, but from the Church of England; and, from the conviction of the absurdities of the Church of Rome, in his maturer years, very candidly supposing, without further search, that all religions were alike, determined on having none?

The following passage is a masterly and complete refutation of the hypercritical pedantry which it has lately been the fashion to level at modern translations of the ancient Poets, and especially at Pope's Homer.

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\* To these may be added Richard, and Prince Henry; but in this last, as well as in Falconbridge, the comic is predominant....  
*Reviewer.*



“ It must be owned, that when the translator places before you,  
 “ not the exact words, but the image of the original, as the classic  
 “ author would probably have expressed himself in English, the  
 “ licence, when moderately employed, has an infinite charm for  
 “ those readers for whose use translations are properly written.  
 “ Pope’s Homer and Dryden’s Virgil can never give exquisite  
 “ satisfaction to scholars accustomed to study the Greek and Latin  
 “ originals. But the mere English reader, who finds rigid adhe-  
 “ rence to antique costumes, rather embarrassing than pleasing,  
 “ is satisfied that the Iliad and the Eneid shall lose their antiqua-  
 “ rian merit, provided they retain that vital spirit and energy  
 “ which is the soul of poetry in all languages, countries, and ages  
 “ whatsoever. He who sits down to Dryden’s translation of Virgil,  
 “ with the original text spread before him, will be at no loss to  
 “ point out many passages that are faulty, many indifferently un-  
 “ derstood, many imperfectly translated; some in which dignity  
 “ is lost, others in which bombast is substituted in its stead. But  
 “ the unabated vigour and spirit of the version more than over-  
 “ balances (*overbalance*) these and all its other deficiencies. A  
 “ sedulous scholar might often approach nearer to the dead letter  
 “ of Virgil, and give an exact, distinct, sober-minded idea of the  
 “ meaning and scope of particular passages\*. Trapp, Pitt, and  
 “ others, have done so; but the essential spirit of poetry is so  
 “ volatile, that it escapes, during such an operation, like the life  
 “ of the poor criminal whom the ancient anatomist is said to have  
 “ dissected alive, in order to ascertain the seat of the soul. The  
 “ carcase, indeed, is presented to the English reader, but the ani-  
 “ matory vigour is no more.” Vol. I. page 314.

It would be, perhaps, no very difficult task for a good ver-  
 sifier, skilled in the learned languages, to make both Dryden’s  
 Virgil and Pope’s Homer tolerably faithful copies of their  
 archetypes, without any very great alteration; but who, that  
 has access (if the expression may be hazarded) to the original  
 translations, would read them?

† Speaking of Sir Robert Howard, Dryden’s brother-in-law,  
 Mr. Scott says—

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\* The same distinction exists between Pope’s and Cowper’s  
 Translations of Homer.---Reviewer.

† Surely the Essay on Dramatic Poetry should have preceded  
 the Defence of it, which is here (Vol. XI. p. 265.) put before the  
 Indian Emperor. In Congreve’s edition of the Plays, the Essay  
 itself is, very properly, printed as an introduction. This viola-  
 tion of the *lucidus ordo* should be rectified in the next edition.

“ The Committee alone kept possession of the stage till our time ; and that solely supported by the humours of a blundering Irish footman, such as we usually see in a modern farce.” Vol. XI. page 103.

The only reason why the Committee is now laid aside, is the temper of the times, too much attached to the party ridiculed in it to like to see them exposed on the stage ; with that part cut out, it is still acted as a farce, under the title of *Honest Thieves*. At the present time, not only Farces, but what are called Comedies, often owe their sole support to the humours of a blundering Irishman.

Surely Mr. Scott is wrong in his preliminary note to Sir Martin Marall, Vol. III. when he says, “ the character of a menial was not quite so low in the 17th as in the 18th century.” Let him only recollect the *argumentum baculinum*, then so frequently used by the master, and which is even applied to the back of Warner in this Comedy.

When the name of Swash Buckler, which is applied to Moody in the *Dramatis Personæ*, is examined, it is odd that the use of the word Swinge Buckler by Shakspeare, should have been omitted, which is thus explained by Mr. Steevens : “ Swinge bucklers, and swash bucklers, were words implying rakes, or rioters, in the time of Shakspeare.”

In the introductory note to the *Tempest*, Vol. III. this just remark occurs :—

“ Much cannot be said for Davenant’s ingenuity in contrasting the character of a woman who had never seen a man, with that of a man who had never seen a woman. Though we are delighted with the feminine simplicity of Miranda, it becomes *unmanly childishness* in Hippolito, and the premature coquetry of Dorinda is disgusting, when contrasted with the maidenly purity that chastens the simplicity of Shakspeare’s heroine.”

This censure is by no means carried to the extent that the subject of it merits. There is no name for the absurdity of the gross ignorance in which Hippolito is supposed to be kept by a man of Prospero’s character ; and as to the character of Dorinda, it is little better than that of the female idiot in

Beaumont and Fletcher's *Pilgrim*, whose sense is confined only to one propensity. The contrast between Shakspeare's *Miranda* and *Dorinda* is, however, lessened in this alteration by Dryden and Davenant, for it is afterwards \* said, and truly, that " *Miranda's* simplicity is converted into indelicacy, and " *Dorinda* talks the language of prostitution before she has seen " a man."

Perhaps one might be tempted to blame the managers of our theatres for inserting these parts from Dryden in the present representation of this play; but we must remember—" That those who live to please, must please to live." The people must reform their own taste themselves. The providers of their entertainment cannot do it for them. If bad plays please them best, they are sooner written, by humbler authors, and at cheaper rates. If men will reconcile themselves to drink warm water and treacle, and pay the price of punch for it, without either acid or spirit to enliven it, the vintners will humour the deception, and profit by the folly of their customers.

In the introductory note to the *State of Innocence*, Mr. Scott says—

" It may justly be questioned whether Dryden shewed his judgment in the choice of a subject which compelled an immediate parallel between Milton and himself, upon a subject so exclusively favourable to the powers of the former." Vol. V. p. 94.

Surely it cannot be a question; especially when the parallel is accompanied with the glaring disadvantage of turning an unrhymed Epic into a rhymed Drama.

The Reviewer does not hesitate to avow his general predilection for rhymed verse; but he can never accede to all that Mr. Hayley has said in his *Life of Milton*; on this composition he will readily allow that, in many passages, the images

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\* Vol. I. page 106.---It is obvious, as has been observed before, that the first volume was the last written.



and harmony of Milton are deplorably injured by the necessity of rhyming ; but not that in any instance, “ perhaps, rhyme has imparted, even to the ideas of Milton, new energy and grace.”

When Mr. Scott observes \* afterwards, that few of Dryden’s readers had read so far into the State of Innocence as to discover that *several of the scenes* are not tagged with rhyme, he would surely have done well to have pointed out where he had ventured to break a lance in blank verse with Milton. These several scenes will however on examination be reduced to part of one, viz. the dialogue between Uriel and Lucifer at the end of the first scene of the second act.

In the comparison of the Anthony of Shakspeare and the All for Love of Dryden, Vol. V. page 290, it is observed, that “ in the character of Ventidius, Dryden has filled up with ability the rude sketches which Shakspeare has thrown off in those of Scea and Eros.”

Why did not Ænobarbus occur here ? However different some of the features may be, he holds the same place in one drama that Ventidius does in the other.

In the preliminary note to that most indecent of all plays, Limberham, Vol. IV. page 4, are the following striking observations :

“ Plays even of this nature being worth preservation, as containing genuine traces of the manners of the age in which they appear ; I cannot but remark the promiscuous intercourse which, in this comedy and others, is represented as taking place between women of character and those who have no pretension to it : such were actually the manners of Charles the Second’s time, when we find the mistresses of the king and his brothers familiar in the highest circles. It is always symptomatic of a total decay of morals, where female reputation neither confers dignity (on) nor excites pride in its possessor, but is consistent with her mingling in the society of the libertine and the profligate.”

This is in general very just ; but the examples drawn from

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\* Vol. I. page 170.

royal mistresses and persons in the highest circles, is no illustration of the mixture in the middle orders of society, as represented in this and others of Dryden's comedies. In *Sir Martin Marall*, for example, how great would be the absurdity of introducing now, an old bawd who has the title of lady, a respectable Kentish old gentleman and his daughter, with a knight who is her honourable suitor, and an English peer, as joint inmates of a common-lodging house in Covent Garden?

In a note on the prologue to the alteration of Shakspeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, Vol. VI. page 268, the author says :

“ The conceit which our ancestors had adopted of their descent  
 “ from Brutus, a fugitive Trojan, induced their poets to load the  
 “ Grecian chiefs with every accusation of cowardice and treachery,  
 “ and to extol the character of the Trojans in the same pro-  
 “ portion. Hector is always represented as being treacherously  
 “ slain.”

The general partiality for the Trojans probably originated from the Tale of Troy divine being usually first learned from Virgil, and not from Homer.—The ancients blamed Achilles for not doing what the moderns suppose him to have done. Plutarch, in his *Life of Pompey*, says, that when Achilles would not suffer any of his soldiers to assist in the attack on Hector, lest they should take away part of his glory, he did not act like a man, but like a boy foolishly fond of fame.

The puerile circumstance\* (as Mr. Scott properly terms it) of the destruction of Malicom the wizzard, in the Duke of Guise, is taken from Sully, where the same story is told of the Duchess de Beaufort. Mr. Rich some years ago gratified the galleries of Covent-Garden Theatre with the same circumstance, in the pantomime of *Harlequin Sorcerer*.

In the preliminary notet to *Don Sebastian*, Mr. Scott seems rather too sanguine in his commendation.—The incestuous nup-

\* Vol. VII. page 10.

† Ib. p. 273.

tials of Sebastian and his sister are infinitely more unfit for the stage, than the love of Alphonso and Victoria in *Love Triumphant*, (of which more hereafter,) both from the actual completion, and from the relation being real and not imaginary. The eulogium bestowed on the scene between Dorax and Sebastian is perfectly just; it has every merit but that of originality. It is the kind of scene the most calculated to excite those sensations of all others the most pleasurable where the tear, not of distress, but of joy, is the most copiously shed. Dryden was so sensible of this, that, as is more than once observed in this work, he has two other scenes of exactly the same kind,—that between Hector and Troilus, and that between Anthony and Ventidius. These scenes however were not, as is said by Mr. Scott, avowedly written in the imitation of the scene between Brutus and Cassius, to which (in point of effect on the passions) the most sanguine admirer of Shakspeare must own they are superior. Their immediate archetype was the scene between Amyntor and Melanthus in the *Maids' Tragedy*. But to trace the origin of this kind of scene, we must go as high as the scene between Agamemnon and Menelaus, in the *Iphigenia in Tauris*. Dramatic poets since Dryden, have followed the same plan, as, in the scenes between Horatio and Altamont in the *Fair Penitent*, and Lord and Lady Townley in the *Provoked Husband*. As it has justly been observed, “it is rather surprising, that when a gay libertine (Antonio) was to be introduced, Dryden did not avail himself of a real character, the English Stukely, a wild gallant, who, after spending a noble fortune, became the leader of a band of Italian Condottori, engaged in the service of Sebastian, and actually fell at the battle of Alcazar.” What makes this more extraordinary, is that the circumstance of Stukely's falling with Sebastian is noticed in one of Beaumont and Fletcher's Comedies. Don Sebastian was acted for a benefit at Covent-Garden Theatre in the year 1794.

In the editor's criticism on *Love Triumphant*, he seems as



unwarrantably severe, as he is favourable in that on Sebastian ; the winding up of the plot by the change of mind in Veramond is particularly censured, but the effect produced by it in the perusal is exactly the same with that in the scene just mentioned. When Mr. Scott speaks of Veramond being moved by a few *soft*-speeches of Celidea, one would suppose he had never read the scene, for her speeches all breathe the most sarcastic irony ; and when he says that Dryden admits the conclusion to be grossly inartificial, we should equally suppose he had never read the dedication of the play to the Earl of Salisbury, in which Dryden boldly asserts that the turns of fortune are *not* managed *unartfully*, and that the last revolution is happily enough invented. It is true, he acknowledges “ that Aristotle “ has declared that the catastrophe which is made from the change “ of will is not of the first order of beauty.” But from the authority of Aristotle, and those who blindly follow him, he appeals. Aristotle might be possibly right, and yet Dryden not wrong. The catastrophe brought about by a change of mind, can only happen, with any degree of probability, from one character working strongly on the passions of another, and this from the extent of the theatres, the masks acting as speaking trumpets, and the other unnatural apparatus, could never happen on the Greek stage, where such scenes as occur between Arthur and Hubert, and between Iago and Othello, could not possibly be represented.

In this preliminary note, a very high eulogium is pronounced on Beaumont and Fletcher’s *King and no King* ; which is termed an admirable old play.—Take a specimen. When Arbaces is informed that Panthea is not his sister, he is so overjoyed that he says to old Ligonius, “ You shall ride on a horse cut out of an entire diamond, that shall be made to go on golden wheels ; I

know not how yet." And he says of the old man's daughter Spaconia, "We'll have the kingdom sold utterly, and put into a toy which she shall wear about her carelessly somewhere or other." Such nonsense has never been put into the mouth even of a maniac or an idiot in any play that was ever produced on the stage.

Mr. Scott has chosen to revive the argument about the close of the century, in a note on the secular masque; and has followed it up again in his life of Dryden.\*

As his illustrations are curious and intended to be witty, they shall be quoted:—

"A hundred years were considered as accomplished, when the hundredth year was just commenced; an error of calculation which could not puzzle a *horse-jockey*, who, if he was to ride twenty-miles, would hardly think he had accomplished the match by riding nineteen."

For *horse-jockey*, read *postilion*: for though twenty miles would be rather long as a stage, they would be out of all reason so as a heat. And again:

"It was supposed by many in our own time, that the century was concluded as soon as the hundredth year commenced; as if a play was ended at the beginning of the fifth act."

A circumstance, by the way, which Mr. Scott would not lament, should he ever turn his pen to the drama. This is not a place to enter into the argument, or to examine the force of these facetious illustrations; suffice it to say that they are quite congenial with that overweening arrogance with which those who held the opinion of Mr. Scott, treated all their opponents. The argument was, *when* the century ended; not whether it ended before it did end.

The following note of Mr. Scott is not very favourable to the impartial distribution of justice in his native country:

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\* Vol. VIII. page 454. Vol. I. page 425.

\* “A principal evil amongst the native Scottish judges was a predilection for their own allies and kinsmen. A judge who lived in the 18th century, justified this partiality for *kith, kin, and ally*, by saying that upon his conscience he could never see any of his friends were in the wrong. And the upright conduct of Cromwell’s English judges being objected to him, he answered, it was not wonderful, since they were a set of *kinless louns*, who had no family connections to bias them.”

† The distinction with regard to the ancient mythology, seems perfectly just :—

“Where the tender, passionate, or sublime, ought to prevail, an allusion to classical fiction seldom fails to interrupt the tone of feeling which the author should seek to preserve; but in a poem, of which elegances of expression and ingenuity of device are the principal attribute, an allusion to the customs of Greece or of Rome, while it gives a classic air to the composition, seems as little misplaced as an apt quotation from the authors in which they are recorded.”

Allusions to the classical mythology are now so generally exploded, that even poor little Cupid hardly keeps his station in a Vauxhall ballad. Yet surely it affords a beautiful personification of the passions as well as of interesting natural objects. It can be no great proof perhaps of the improvement of taste, when the Naiads and Dryads are driven from the fountain and the grove, to give place to the Water King or the Grim White Woman.

The loyalty and real patriotism of Mr. Scott’s character of Monk‡ cannot be too highly commended ;—

“George Monk, Duke of Albemarle, the *restorer of English monarchy*, united in his person some very different qualities. With a steady, reserved, and even tardy manner, he was in action fierce and daring to the last degree; adopting the most desperate course with the air and the manner of the most cool deliberation. He had signalized himself against the Dutch during the war of the Commonwealth, being in the chief command of

\* Vol. IX. page 20.

† Ib. p. 29 ; note on the *Astræa Redux*.

‡ Ib. p. 168 ; note on the *Annus Mirabilis*.



“ the fleet when they received the dreadful defeat in 1653. The  
 “ Duke accepted the joint command with Prince Rupert, in 1665,  
 “ much against the advice of his friends, who accounted it rash in  
 “ him to stake upon the issue of a battle, the well-earned fame  
 “ which he had acquired, by signal successes in war, and by *ac-*  
 “ *complishing a mighty revolution without bloodshed.* But he  
 “ resolved to exert his talents once more, for the good of his coun-  
 “ try in this trying crisis; a circumstance highly gratifying to the  
 “ seamen, who crowded to man the fleet, saying they were sure  
 “ honest George would see them well fed and duly paid; a com-  
 “ pliment, more honourable than many of more courtly expres-  
 “ sion.”

It is lamentable to observe, that at this time, when we are enjoying the blessing of a limited monarchy, that part of his character distinguished here by italics, is treated in many writings as a crime of such a magnitude as to throw a shade over the rest of his actions. Among these, the posthumous historical fragment of a late eminent statesman holds a conspicuous place\*.

Perhaps the note on transubstantiation† might have been better omitted; surely we can want no argument now to prove the absurdity of it. It is singular enough that Tully should have written against it:—“ *Cùm fruges Cererem, vinum Libe-  
 rum dicimus, genere nos quidem utimur usitato; sed ecquem  
 tam amentem esse putas, qui illud quo vescatur Deum credat  
 esse?*”

Dr. Ralph Bathurst, who is so highly praised in one ‡ of Dryden's prologues, and of whom much is said in a note, was not, as is there mentioned, uncle, but great uncle, to the first Lord Bathurst. When the death of his nephew, Sir Benjamin Bathurst, was announced to him at Trinity College, he said; “ I was sitting in this room when I heard of his birth.”

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\* Vide Introductory Chapter, p. 19.

† Vol. X. page 154; note on the Hind and the Panther.

‡ Ib. p. 33; note on a Prologue spoken at Oxford

Of this couplet, which occurs in one of Dryden's \* Epistles,

“How will sweet Ovid's ghost be pleas'd to hear

“His fame augmented by an English Peer?”

it is justly observed, that it savours of the bathos. Pope however has gone beyond his master in this couplet :

“Grac'd as thou art with all the power of words,

“So known, so honour'd in the House of Lords.”

Mr. Scott tells us, that Mr. Malone regardst† Dryden's celebrated hexastich on Milton, as an amplification of Selvaggi's distich addressed to Milton while at Rome :

“Grecia Mæonidem jactet sibi Roma Maronem ;

“Anglia Miltonum jactet utrique parem.”

As Milton could not have merited so high an eulogium notwithstanding the great merit of his minor poems before he had written his divine epopee, one would be tempted to think he had made some progress in the *Paradise Lost* long before its publication. Indeed, it could hardly be deemed possible that his great design, which he often speaks of with enthusiasm, in the language of Virgil, almost—

“—Tentanda via est quâ me quoque possim

“Tollere humo victorque virum volitare per ora ;”

should not, during so long a period, have employed both his thoughts and his pen.

The definition of shooting at rovers is not quite correct ‡ :—

“Shooting at rovers, in archery, is opposed to shooting at butts.

“In the former exercise the bowman, shoots at random merely to

“show how far he can send his arrow.” Shooting at rovers, as

the word implies, means shooting at moving objects, as deer,

hares, &c. Dryden, in the passage to which this note refers,

\* Vol. XI. page 30. † Ib. p. 160. ‡ Vol. XIII. page 10.

applies the terms of archery to the gun; his words are: "They either shot at rovers, and therefore missed, or their powder was so weak, that I might safely stand them at the nearest distance." Shooting flying, in Dryden's time, was a very rare accomplishment; and those who tried it, generally missed: but a person cannot be said to miss, who never tries to hit.

The refutation of the refinement of some critics, who would make the *Iliad* as complete an allegory as the *Fairy Queen*, and the observations on the character of Achilles, are too excellent to be withheld from the reader.\*

"The cant of supposing that the *Iliad* contained an obvious and intentional moral, was at this time so established among the critics, that even Dryden durst not shake himself free of it. In all probability, the ancient bard only thought of so arranging his splendid tale of Troy divine, that it should arrest the attention of his hearers. Doubtless an admirable moral may be often extracted from his poem; because, it contains an accurate picture of human nature, which can never be truly presented without conveying a lesson of instruction. But, it may shrewdly be suspected, that the moral was as little intended by the author, as it would have been the object of an historian, whose work is equally pregnant with morality, though a detail of facts be only intended. We may be pretty sure that Homer meant Achilles, the favourite of the gods, as a character approaching perfection; and if he is cruel, proud, disobedient, and revengeful, I am afraid, it was only because these attributes, in a savage state, are deemed as little derogatory from the character of a hero, as dissipation and gallantry are blemishes in that of a modern fine gentleman."

Something more will be said on the character of Achilles, when we come to the comparison between the games of Homer and Virgil: but those who wish to see a complete vindication of it, are referred to the essays of that excellent scholar, poet, and critic, and, what is much more, that excellent man, the late Dr. Beattie.

The author's subsequent observation, that the *Æneid* had

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\* Vol. XIV. page 134; note, on the Dedication of the *Æneid*.



certainly a political, if not a moral purpose, is just\*. But though part of its purpose obviously was to flatter the vanity of the Romans, and reconcile them to a monarchical government; yet the chief end seems to be to dissuade Augustus from his favourite plan of rebuilding Troy, and removing the imperial seat thither; a plan which was strongly opposed by Mæcenas, the great patron both of Virgil and of Horace, who has an ode avowedly written for the same purpose.

On the partial comparison in the same dedication between Achilles and Æneas, one of the advantages the latter is said to have had over the former in point of courage, is his not being invulnerable. Mr. Scott observes† that Dryden had forgot what he must certainly have known, that the fiction of Achilles being invulnerable bears date long posterior to the days of Homer. In the Iliad, he is described as actually wounded. But has Mr. Scott forgotten, that though, as he remarks, Achilles is actually wounded in the Iliad by Asteropæus, and the blood described as gushing out—*σὺ το δ' αἶμα κελαινεφές.*

“ The spouting blood  
 “ Spun forth.” POPE.

and though it appears from the account in the 12th book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, of the combat between Achilles and Cygnus, that this quality was unknown to Achilles himself as well as to Nestor, who tells him at supper afterwards, that Cygnus was the only man in that age who was invulnerable; what a strong possession this foolish notion had got of the imagination of all the Delphin editors, and of all the old commentators without exception; nay, we may class Mr. Scott himself among these critics; for, in an allusion in his life of Dryden we find‡: “ As it was impossible for Achilles (invulnerable every where  
 “ else) to survive the wound which a dextrous archer had aimed

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\* Vol. XIV. page 144. † Ib. p. 163.

‡ Vol. I. page 269.

at his heel!" A remark of Dryden in the same preface, "that Virgil sometimes pours cold water into his cauldron when his business is to make it boil," draws this observation from Mr. Scott:\* "Virgil, who lived in a peaceful court, does not draw his battles with the animation and reality of Homer, who, if he was not himself a warrior, was the poet of a rude and war-like age." The fictions of a good poet who is describing the manners of his own age, will have always the appearance of truth; the heroic times of Achilles and Æneas were no more congenial with the age of Augustus, than the feudal system is with the present day.

Speaking of the games in the Æneid, Mr. Scott says, in a note†:

"Virgil seems to me to have excelled Homer in those sports, and to have laboured them the more in the honour of Octavius his patron, who instituted the like games for perpetuating the memory of his uncle Julius."

In this, the opinion of the reviewer is directly opposite to that of the commentator. There is no part in the poem in which the Roman poet seems to have fallen so far short of his archetype. Elaborate he certainly is, but there is no animation, no interest. Exactly the reverse may be said of Homer. The dispute between Menelaus and Antilochus during the chariot-race, and subsequent reconciliation, and the quarrel and bet between Idomeneus and the Lesser Ajax, are before the eyes of the reader; they are pictures of truth and nature, which appear on the plains of Newmarket as well as on the sands of Troy. And the conduct of the ferocious and brutal Achilles, as he is called by superficial hypercritics, is that of the most polite and accomplished gentleman; for instance, the liberality and attention with which he reconciles the disputants, and his respectful deference to Agamemnon when he offers to contend for one of the prizes.

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\* Vol. XIV. page 186.

† Ib. p. 357.

This observation, in a note on the *Essay on Dramatic Poetry*\*, if it be true, is a complete refutation of those who compare modern blank-verse with the ancient heroic verse; as the boundary of every hexameter is at least as distinctly marked by the cesure and concluding adonic as they could be by rhyme. The words of Mr. Scott are; “There is that difference, that from the mode of pronunciation, the rhythm of blank-verse does not necessarily obtrude itself on the audience, that of the couplet indubitably must.”

The sixteenth volume being entirely filled with the life of Saint Francis Xavier, Mr. Scott has very properly abstained from making any remarks on what most probably no one will read. Notwithstanding this, we cannot except to its insertion in an edition which professes to give a complete collection of all the works of Dryden.

In a note on that part of the parallel between poetry and painting†, which notices the continence of Scipio, Mr. Scott says;

“The celebrity of that action which is generally called the continence of Scipio, gives us a woeful idea of the gross barbarity of the age in which he lived. What would now be said of a general who did not act as Scipio is said to have done? Assuredly, his refusing the ransom would be thought more wonderful than his dismissing uninjured the betrothed princess.”

Did not Mr. Scott write this note before the French Revolution? Previously to that event, no general would have dared to retain either; now a French general, if he liked the lady, would retain both. Lord Lyttleton has entered largely into the merits of this action, in a dialogue between Titus and Scipio.

In a note on one of Dryden's letters‡ this curious remark occurs, which reminds us of some of the sage remarks in the *Variorum Shakspeare* that refer to past times, and particular

\* Vol. XV. page 377.

† Vol. XVIII. page 303.

‡ *Ib.* p. 102.



places and customs, that are in general practised at the present day : “ It was an ancient British custom, and prevailed in Scotland within these forty years, to finish all bargains, contracts, and even consultations, at a tavern, that the parties might not, according to the ancient Caledonian phrase, part ‘ *dry-lipp’d*. ”

There does not seem any reason why, in another note \*, a letter of Dryden’s, the spelling Vanburgh, Vanbrook, should be selected as an instance, that, in Dryden’s age, the spelling of proper names was not punctiliously attended to, when in the same letter his own family name is twice pelled Driden.

Having now gone through the work, and made such remarks on particular passages as they occurred in the course of the perusal, it remains to say something of the general character and execution of it.

It abounds with many curious and interesting anecdotes, particularly so, as they are illustrative of the customs and manners of the period when Dryden wrote, so different from the present day, though the intervening lapse of time is not very great. The criticism is in general candid, manly, and judicious, and the observations on the state of English versification when Dryden began to write, and on the amelioration from him during his poetical career, possess very great merit and form a valuable addition to the literary history of the country.

Of the language, the extracts that have been made, will enable the reader to judge. If any inaccuracy of expression, or anomaly of construction occur, they must be imputed to the same cause that occasioned the deficiency of arrangement already mentioned, viz. the pressing the work too forward for publication. Whatever merits this composition possesses, they would have been greatly multiplied, had the author allowed himself more time for the production. But, above all

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\* Vol. XVIII. page 182.

things, what is most wanted, was, previously to the publication, the inspecting eye of a friendly critic; not of such a friend as would be inclined to spare small faults for the sake of greater merits, but one who would anticipate the fiery ordeal through which every work must pass that is submitted to the public eye, and who would censure every error, however slight, with the same asperity with which it will certainly be treated by some of the professional censors of the press. With such a Mentor, it must have been impossible for the word hexameter to have occurred more than once as synonymous with an English heroic verse.

Throughout the work, the Greek quotations are sometimes accented and sometimes not: this has a very awkward appearance, and shews that it merely depended on the author from whom the quotations were taken. In all the prose works of Dryden, the Greek is accented, except in the notes on Virgil, where it is not accented; as also in a quotation from Twining's Aristotle, in which work the accents are omitted. Many (which must have been the case with so learned a man as Mr. Twining) discard them from system, but many more from not being able to supply them where they are wanting, even as grammatical distinctions.

The printing the ode on St. Cecilia's Day with the choruses repeated in italics in this edition, reduces the dignity of this distinguished effusion of lyric poetry to the printed pamphlets sold at the doors of the theatre, when it is performed as an oratorio.

The application of the word Catholic to the Papists pervades the whole work. It is indeed the fashionable jargon of the day; but whether, in the words of our own liturgy, we conceive it to comprehend "all who profess and call themselves Christians," or, in the words of Lactantius, confined to those "*qui verum cultum retinent*;" it cannot with propriety be applied exclusively to the church of Rome, except by a member of

that church, which we take for granted, is not the case with Mr. Scott.

If Mr. Scott will attend to some of these observations (made by no unfriendly pen) in another edition, the work will be more worthy of the general attention which it is likely to obtain.

DONATOA. EPOPÖIE VON F. A. BARON SONNENBERG. *Sechs Gesänge. Halle, 1806. i. e. DONATOA. AN EPIC POEM. Six Books.*

THE supposition, that we are in some degree indebted, for the immortal poem of Milton, to the political circumstances of the period at which it was written, seems to derive additional support from the appearance of an equally sublime Epic Poem, composed in Germany, amidst the wrecks of empires, monarchies, and republics, in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Donatoa, the angel of Death and of Love, entrusted by the Omnipotent with the destruction of our planet, is its awful subject. It involves the picture of the world. Sea and land, light and shade, noon and night, children and men, innocence and guilt, love and hatred, domestic bliss and national broils, shepherds and warriors, kings and subjects, enter alike into this various composition. The theme is most extensive: and yet the Poet has successfully embraced it, in the execution of his vast design. No suspicion of flattery can reach us, when we re-echo the opinion of the ablest judges, and inscribe the name of *Sonnenberg* on the same tablet of Epic fame, which holds the hallowed names of *Homer, Virgil, Milton, and Klopstock*. The author of Donatoa is no more. Death did not suffer him to reap the rich



harvest of glory, which his admirable genius had prepared for him.

Francis Anthony Baron Sonnenberg was born at Münster, in Westphalia, on the 5th of September, 1778. Educated in the Roman Catholic faith, which restricts the perusal of the Scriptures among the laity, he read the books of Holy Writ with the most impatient curiosity, and dwelt with enthusiasm on the Prophets and on the Revelation of Saint John. His poetic fancy having caught the idea, that the dissolution of the world was not far distant, he had hardly reached his sixteenth year, when he applied the time, which he stole from his academical studies, to the composition of a Poem intitled *The World's End*, published at Vienna in 1800. This juvenile production, notwithstanding all its faults and imperfections, gave an early promise of those better hopes, which his Donatoa has so amply realized.

Sensible of the assistance that his natural genius would derive from the perusal of the best ancient and modern Poets, and from a more intimate acquaintance with the beauties of nature, Sonnenberg left Vienna, to devote himself to meditation, and pursue his studies among the Alps of Switzerland. It was in Tell's Chapel that he wrote his verses intitled *Basso Relievos upon the Sarcophagus of the Eighteenth Century*. From Switzerland he proceeded to Paris.

After his travels, Sonnenberg resided, for a short time, in his native city. In a second excursion through Germany, he fixed his abode at Drakendorf, a small town near Jena, in Saxony; and in this rural retreat finished the work that immortalizes his name. He died at Jena, on the 22d of November, 1805, at the age of 27 years, 2 months, and 17 days.

In personal appearance, Sonnenberg is reported to have resembled the great German Dramatist Schiller, to whom he also bears a mental resemblance in loftiness of thought, and energy of style. Combining the utmost diligence with a rare originality, he bestowed the most minute attention on the

choice and place of a single word, and has been known to shew his friends from four to sixteen different readings of the same line.

He lived but for his Poem. His mind glowed with the most ardent love of literary fame. He wrote for immortality.

As the first six books only of Sonnenberg's Poem have found their way to England, we shall confine ourselves to a very short analysis of their contents, and reserve our critical remarks, and more copious extracts, for the time when the examination of the remaining parts will enable us to pronounce on the whole.

At the opening of the Poem, the guardian genius of our planet is hovering high over the earth. In a moving strain he bids farewell to its inhabitants. Tyranny, and all sorts of foul crimes, force him to leave his favourite abode. He assembles the tutelary geniuses of mankind, and dispatches them to the Father of all, to implore a more powerful protection for the Earth. They wing their flight to the throne of the Most High, and bear evidence against the inhabitants of a globe—

“Where the world's self-crown'd tyrant, for his sport,  
 “Makes ceaseless wars, and with th' unburied bones  
 “Of slaughter'd myriads, rears his subject thrones.”

The dark angels of Death demand the destruction of our world; but the gentler Olymp intreats the Mediator to intercede in behalf of the Earth with the Supreme Judge. It is in consequence of this mediation that Jehovah abandons to Donatoa the globe and its tenants.

Donatoa is the first of the angels of Death and of Love, the first of all created beings. He is sublimely great. To kill is the end of his being: but wherever he kills, forthcomes new life.

All the angels of Death attend Donatoa in his descent to the earth. The Archangel Michael overtakes him, and begs to be allowed to devise means of salvation for the human race. Donatoa, in the mean time, prepares dreadful calamities, to warn the world of its impending fate. A star falls from the

firmament. Nature is convulsed. Adami, the first guardian genius of the human race, intercedes with Donatoa, who answers, 'That mankind may yet choose between Heaven and Hell. Trusting, therefore, to Michael's more powerful affection for the earth, Adami quits it with a glimpse of hope.'

The second book opens with Donatoa's assembling the guardian geniuses of the earth, to be informed of the actual situation of mankind. The Olympians, in the mean time, develop the plan, which is to save the human race. There are yet two virtuous beings on earth, with whom Heaven may hold communication—Eliora, an old man, and Heroal, a youth. In one of their conversations, Eliora says—

“ See, and confess, beloved of my soul,  
 “ If tyrant man must rule without controul,  
 “ How soon, how sure, his arbitrary reign,  
 “ Shall call the barbarous ages back again :  
 “ Whelm us in darkness, Earth's fair fabric rend,  
 “ And bring Creation to a fearful end :  
 “ But, oh ! if peace and purity could join,  
 “ And love, so sensual now, become divine,  
 “ Men would be brethren, war would be destroy'd,  
 “ Bliss, only known to Heav'n, would be enjoy'd ;  
 “ Nations would own no king but God alone,  
 “ Men be his angels, and this earth his throne.”

Eliora entrusts Heroal with a child, which he is to deliver to the fair Herkla, whom Eliora has previously informed of Heroal's coming.

Whilst this is passing on earth, *Donatoa* dispatches *Leli Alphaod* to Hell, to prevail with Satan to withdraw his Stygi-ans from the world ; Heaven having likewise recalled the Olympians, that Man might be left absolutely free. Satan, instead of complying, orders his satellites to hover over the papal city. He leads them on in pompous array. *Alphaod* vainly opposes their passage. The Stygians prevail.

Sonnenberg's Hell is still more terrific than either Milton's or Klopstock's.

In the third book, *Donatoa* stations the angels of Death



about the earth. Satan holds a council; at its breaking up, he hastens to Abdul, and cries out—

“ Abdul, approach! To thee alone I give  
 “ Supreme dominion over all that live :  
 “ Take the whole Earth; 'tis thine by my decree ;  
 “ If one survives to boast that he is free,  
 “ Crush his proud spirit underneath thy feet ;  
 “ What thy soul covets, let thy sword complete ;  
 “ Heed not who calls thee man of blood accurst ;  
 “ Drink deep, and satisfy thy burning thirst !  
 “ Send forth thy murderers, and where'er they tread,  
 “ Let their trac'd foot-steps dye the green earth red ;  
 “ Who rules above concerns not thee to know,  
 “ Whilst thou art master of the world below.”

To whom this points, the reader needs not to be told.

Abdul assembles armies to assail the kingdoms of the world. Satan rejoices that, by his means, Heroal will be instigated to act in opposition to the Archangel Michael's plan. He travels from one sovereign to the other, and at last comes to the rich avaricious demagogue Allwill.

Meanwhile, the wise Eliora resolves, in his solitude, to restore the true spirit of religion among men. Before he commences his project, he is tempted by one of Satan's satellites : but the sage stands firm. The young man Heroal, on the contrary, at the news of war, falls a prey to the most violent agitations, and burns with impatience to rush into the field. His ardour, however, is to be restrained. The Archangel places Dælion, Heroal's guardian genius, as a watch over him. On a journey with Herkla, love insinuates itself into Heroal's heart. Herkla returns his affection. Eliora sets out on his plan of reforming the world ; it fails at home : he passes to another quarter of the globe.

The fourth book opens with an Hymn to the Rising Sun, in the style of Milton's *Hail ! holy Light !* Almost the whole of this hymn conducts the reader through a beautiful nature to pure love. Eliora's Birth-day, the Feast of Spring, and Heroal's discovering Herkla asleep in a bower, are severally very charming idyls.

Of the striking instances of degeneracy witnessed by Eliora in the countries which he visits, one of the most prominent is the character of *Egol*, a refined man of the world, to whom morality, virtue and love, are a mere fiction.

The doctrine of *Atheor*, whose disciples propagate its tenets with particular zeal, accelerates the corruption of the world.

Abdul makes the thunder of battles roar; conquered kingdoms crown the victor. The wailings of distress increase with the bloody carnage. Towns are devoured by flames; cities overturned by earthquakes; nought is heard around but the lamentations of countries laid waste, and plundered states. Daughters are torn from their mothers, the shepherdess from her shepherd. The laws are trampled upon; the tyrant's yoke, and the wanton revels of rioting robbers, prevail. Every thing offers the dreadful picture of consummate misery; but misery still unites not the nations of the earth for their common defence.

In the Fifth Book, the war continues to rage. Battle follows battle. Kings are dethroned. All submit to Abdul's sway. His armies penetrate into Heroal's country. Heroal struggles to repress his warlike ardour. His soul is fired with indignation at the Demagogue Allwill's conduct. He plans his overthrow, but the gentle Herkla dissuades him from the perilous project.

Abdul demands of Heroal's country a tribute of females. The senate is in the greatest consternation. Egol advises compliance, and as Heroal and Herkla's attachment has offended the selfish senator, he forms the design of separating the lovers, and soon effects his purpose. Abdul, in the mean time, enslaves a portion of the globe. The sage Eliora continues faithful to his vocation of stemming the torrent of corruption, by attempting a reform.

The sixth Book shews Abdul reigning triumphantly over the regions of his quarter of the globe, Heroal's small native

country excepted. Abdul determines to be solemnly crowned. At the coronation he says :—" I, by my own grace, sovereign ruler of the world, anoint and crown myself."

During the ceremony, Egol is honoured with a smile by Abdul, in consequence of which he resolves to betray his country. On his way homewards he is encouraged in his design by Beelzebub, who also stimulates him to keep Heroal and Herkla separated.

The activity of the inhabitants of Hell increases in every quarter. Mammon excites Mordal to ruin Allwill, and to be beforehand with Egol.

Abdul invades Allwill's country, and possesses himself of the demagogue's treasures. Mammon laughs at Allwill, and at length persuades him to hang himself. He says—

- " What, man ! If Mammon be your god, behold
- " A forest waves with vegetable gold :
- " Look how that tree invites you to suspend
- " Your votive carcase where its branches bend.
- " Hang yourself, miser, on that tempting bough !
- " The first friend that you meet will shew you how :—
- " Why, 'tis a deed as pleasant as to weep
- " O'er your spent shilling,—easy as to sleep
- " On your coarse pallet : Come, apply the rope ;
- " 'Tis my prescription, and your only hope :
- " There in your leafy hammock as you swing,
- " Sweet Philomel your requiem shall sing ;
- " Whilst zephyrs waft you to the silent shore
- " Of that calm lake, where Charon plies the oar :
- " Your halter there, the garter of my knights,
- " Shall put th' old wrangling ferryman to rights :
- " Shew him your neckcloth ; that at once shall be
- " Your passport, and he'll waft you o'er to me."

Beelzebub also is not idle. Egol is the instrument which he employs to destroy the Archangel Michael's hopes. A message, sent by Heroal to his Herkla, is intercepted by Egol, who deceives Heroal with fabricated intelligence. Beelzebub triumphs. Michael mourns, and hastens to Heroal's guardian



genius to inform him, that his protection is no longer sufficient for Heroal, who will be guarded by a cherub.

But, notwithstanding the dreadful storms which rage in his breast, Heroal loses nothing of his greatness. Misfortune elevates his soul. He flies to Italy, and soon, resuming his courage, proceeds in the right path. The tender Herkla remains a prey to the most tormenting anguish.

Abdul, in a general congress, appoints Mordal his arch-treasurer, and Egol his prime-minister. He is advised to favour commerce.—

“ Hear me, dread sir ! Let Science cease her toil,  
 “ And moping pedants spare their midnight oil ;  
 “ Let it be our ambition to obtain  
 “ The arts of Trade, and mysteries of Gain ;  
 “ Let our desponding traffickers once more  
 “ Warp their rich vessels to the welcome shore :  
 “ There, whilst the recompens’d adventurers land  
 “ Their freighted treasures on the crowded strand,  
 “ The war-worn chief shall hail returning peace,  
 “ Sheath his fell sword, and bid the clarion cease.”

But Abdul persists in his own plans. Hell rejoices. Donatoa spreads terror over the capital. The Archangel Michael wishes to bring the wise Eliora and young Heroal once more together ; Donatoa forbids it.

Eliora returns from his unsuccessful mission : disgusted with the scenes, which he has every where witnessed in the world, he sickens and dies. The distressed Herkla has nothing left but love and hope ; to find Heroal, she leaves her home, and bids a tender adieu to her native island. A mysterious scene closes the song.

If it be true, that Poesy is the darling offspring of genius, we need not offer any apology for our imperfect, and, as it were, anticipated account of half of one of the most astonishing productions of the age. Donatoa appears particularly well calculated to rescue German literature from the fashionable contempt, which a few injudicious translations of inferior dramatic pieces, and indifferent novels, have lately brought

upon it in this country. May we not indulge the hope, that some of our readers at least, will share our impatience to be acquainted with the whole of a poem, on which we shall bestow the most minute attention, as soon as the work is regularly imported?

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PLAN OF AN EPIC POEM, IN TWELVE BOOKS, TO BE INTITLED ARMAGEDDON. BY MR. GEORGE TOWNSEND, OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

HAVING, in the preceding article, submitted to my readers the plan of part of Baron Sonnenberg's poem, not yet in circulation, by which I have ventured to deviate from the usual practice of Reviewers, I flatter myself I shall meet a candid interpretation of my motives, if I now proceed to lay before them the project of a poem, intitled *Armageddon*, which by a coincidence rather curious, and decidedly not preconcerted, takes for its subject the very same sublime and daring speculation. To secure to our countryman, as far as this testimony may circulate, his just claim to originality, of which I am a true and faithful witness, I have obtained from him the plan hereunto annexed, with the argument of each of the twelve books, on which he purposes to found his poem.

Upon the comparative merits of these plans, thus brought together, there are hardly *data* sufficient to enable me to speak, if I were so disposed. Charged as I have been with plagiarism from a German, whose works I never saw, and whose words I cannot read, I hold it as my duty to defend this young adventurer from the like degrading imputation, by seizing the fit public opportunity in my power of vindicating his title to the honour of an indisputable originality; and although in the prosecution of that duty, I may be charged with

offending against custom, it is an accusation not so terrible to meet, as that which would else have troubled me from a quarter nearer to my heart.

An undertaking of this arduous and awful character, which seems to require all the strength, that mature judgment, deep study, and long practice, can furnish to the mental faculties, appears, from the instances of Sonnenberg and our countryman, to be reserved for those ambitious spirits only, whom youthful energy and warm imagination animate to attempt it. Sonnenberg began a poem in his sixteenth year; Townsend in his twentieth. The German appears to digress more variously and more fancifully from the prophetic text; the English Poet adheres more closely to the scriptural revelations of Saint John; and I submit to the judgment of my readers, whether his plan does not seem more methodized, more uniformly lofty, and far less allegorical. Upon the dissolution of all things, his Muse takes her flight, without one earthly atom on her wings, into space—

“Unsoar'd by Seraph, and unsung by man.”

A few short memoirs of this young man's life, before I give the project of his work, will not be out of place, if he shall prove, as I must think he will, to rank amongst the noblest of our Poets. His father is the Reverend Mr. Townsend, Minister to a dissenting congregation at Ramsgate; a virtuous, exemplary and truly pious man, universally respected. As a separatist from the Established Church for conscience-sake, Mr. Townsend, unbeneficed, is the father of a very numerous family of children, with means extremely circumscribed; and our Poet, having received an education in Christ's Hospital, had a livelihood to seek.—

“The world was all before him, where to choose  
His place of rest, and Providence his guide.”

His efforts were laudable, but fortune did not favour them, and he was thrown back upon his father for support, without



employ, or any prospects that encouraged hope. He now perambulated the shores of Ramsgate, solitary and musing as he walked; by which meditations he amassed and stored in his retentive memory a vast and various amount of miscellaneous verses, which it was not his habit to commit to paper.

At length, after many struggles with a diffidence and humility, which, as obstacles in his way towards me, might have been much more easily dispensed with, he introduced himself to me, whilst I was there a resident in Albion Place. Of his recitations I was soon presented by him with specimens to a considerable extent; of his written poems I had only a very few copies, which I caused him to transcribe, for my better understanding of them, as his manner of reciting is by no means good. His metre then was extremely faulty and unformed; his ear not tuned to any harmony of verse, his taste was badly grounded on a bad choice of models; but gleams of genius, and fertility of fancy, occasionally broke out with such auspicious promise, that I held myself at all times conscientiously accessible to him, and never suffered his interruption of my studies to be an excuse for not attending to the furtherance and improvement of his, so far as my experience and advice could serve him. Let me ascribe the credit to him rather than to myself, when I say that his advances were now rapid in the extreme; his fancy and his style, at first so irregular and so inflated, now became chastised and simplified, whilst his mind was pregnant with sublime ideas. I put him by from petty undertakings, and his genius instantly devised magnificent ones. I reminded him, that he could never earn the title of *Poet*, according to its true and real definition, by a mass of little parts, but only by the composition of a great and perfect whole. He took me at my word; the doctrine suited his innate ambition, and his expressive countenance at a glance convinced me that even then the fermentation of his genius had begun. In a short time after, he burst upon me with his super-human project of the *Armageddon*.

It struck me (and I think it will strike others when they read his project) as an attempt which seems to arrogate such mental powers as are not given to man. I did not dare to say, "Go on! Adventure into worlds unknown; make a new language, and give names to things, that have no name in any language that man ever spoke; and let your genius find a resting-place whereon to raise a trophy to your fame, when all created matter is dissolved." Something like this was in my thoughts to say; but believing, as I do, that he is born to ornament an age which I can never live to see, and persuaded that he will strike out something magnificent, in spite of all its failings, I presume to lay his plan before the public, trusting that, if any man sees matter of offence in my so doing, he will forbear to damp the genius of this youthful Poet in the very act of parturition, and vent his anger upon me. If, in my zeal to secure Mr. Townsend from the future imputation of plagiarism, I have done ill and indiscreetly in the mode I have pursued for that purpose, mine is the fault, and let me bear the blame.—

“ — *Adsum, qui feci.* ”

#### “ ARGUMENT OF BOOK I.

“ Subject proposed. Invocation. The Millennium being over,  
 “ God commissions Asriel to bear up the living to Armageddon.  
 “ Last evening on earth. Address to the Moon. Occupations of  
 “ mankind at the moment the angels descend. Asriel declares  
 “ time to be no more, and the angels take up the living to meet their  
 “ Lord. Resurrection of the dead, and their transit to the scene  
 “ of judgment. Jesus appears on his throne, the demons hovering  
 “ round as accusers. The judgment commences. The final doom  
 “ of all. The righteous conveyed by angels to their appointed  
 “ thrones in heaven, and the wicked delivered to the assembled  
 “ demons.

#### “ BOOK II.

“ Jesus returns from judging the world. Opening and shutting the gate of Heaven. He sits on the right hand of God.  
 “ A description of Heaven. The song of the angels. The

“ Redeemed adore. Meeting of the first and last man. Jesus  
“ blesses the Redeemed, who cast their crowns at his feet. He  
“ oversees the consultation of the demons, and exhorts the angels  
“ to prepare for the tremendous conflict.

“ BOOK III.

“ Description of the demons conveying the condemned to the  
“ regions of Hell, whom they hurl with violence into the yawning  
“ abyss. Pandemonium having been destroyed, they assemble at  
“ Achim, a rock above the sea of flames, and illumined by the  
“ fire at the base. A description of Hell, as seen from Achim.  
“ After a silence of three days, the consultation begins by the  
“ counsel of Adramelech, Baalzebub, Rimmon, Thammuz, Brahma,  
“ Chemos; who all advise different measures;—in the midst of  
“ Chemos’s speech the consultation is interrupted by the execra-  
“ tions of the condemned, whirled round the base of Achim.  
“ Chemos continues. Moloch, and other Demons, speak.

“ BOOK IV.

“ Satan rises, and commissions Belial and Mammon to destroy  
“ created matter, by hurling a comet out of its orbit, increasing  
“ the centripetal force of the sun, and involving earth and the  
“ planets in a vortex of fire. The blaze of the burning world is  
“ the signal of attack on Heaven. The assembly break up. Pre-  
“ pare for action. Their arms. Appearance. Chariots, &c.  
“ described. The march to Armageddon begun.

“ BOOK V.

“ Belial and Mammon begin their journey through the circumam-  
“ bient darkness of Hell; thence through the stars; till they arrive  
“ at the orbit of the comet (the episode which their journey occa-  
“ sions). Mammon relates to Belial his influence on mankind,  
“ and the agency of spirits in general. He describes the great  
“ and singular events in the history of mankind, from the time of  
“ the Deluge to the Millennium when he was constrained to leave  
“ the world.

“ BOOK VI.

“ Belial continues the narration of events, and describes Satan,  
“ at the commencement of the Millennium, surprised by the Angels,  
“ and compelled to wander through space a thousand years.  
“ The peaceful reign of Christ on earth. Return of evil into  
“ the world by Satan escaping and entering the world. His  
“ calling the demons on the sound of the last trumpet. Mammon



“ and Belial meet a horrible and indistinct shadow, and find it to  
 “ be Sin, leaving the deserted world. Their conference. Belial  
 “ and Mammon proceed. Sin flies to Adès.

#### “ BOOK VII.

“ Belial and Mammon arrive at the orbit of the comet, and  
 “ perceive Death seated on the orbit of the Earth, contemplating  
 “ it, and waiting for the completion of his work. They go to him.  
 “ Their conference. Death joins himself to the demons. Belial  
 “ strikes the comet with his spear, and Mammon hurls it through  
 “ the air. The planet Saturn taken by it, and drawn with it  
 “ into the sun. The elements melt. Earth is precipitated into  
 “ the vortex. God commissions Gabriel to snatch the Bible from  
 “ the burning world. General conflagration. Exultation of  
 “ Death. General dissolution of all created matter.

#### “ BOOK VIII.

“ Upon the sight of the fire, Satan advances, and encamps at  
 “ Armageddon. The scene of action described. Belial, Mammon  
 “ and Death present themselves to Satan at the head of his  
 “ army. Their conference. The angelic army advance, and  
 “ bring with them the Saints, whom they place apart to see the  
 “ triumph over their enemies. The leaders described. The battle  
 “ begins with skirmishes on both sides. Night coming on, the  
 “ parties rest till morning. Satan addresses his army. The atten-  
 “ tion of both parties directed to the dying flames of the world,  
 “ which appears as a sea of *molten glass*.

#### “ BOOK IX.

“ Michael calls to his host to view the ruins of the burning  
 “ world. His speech thereon. As morning dawns, the battle  
 “ of Armageddon begins. Satan attacks the Saints, and defeats  
 “ the angels who defend them. Addresses his army, and is  
 “ advancing; when a wall of fire rises, to protect the Saints, which  
 “ Satan and his army find it impossible to break through. The  
 “ angels renew the attack, but are defeated by the appearance of  
 “ Death, who had conquered in another part. Satan advances,  
 “ and, encouraging his army, leads them to the very gates of  
 “ Heaven.

#### “ BOOK X.

“ Satan and his army, with horrid clamour, burst open the gates  
 “ of Heaven, and prepare to enter; when the Messiah appears,  
 “ and rides forth into the midst of them. The demons resist;  
 “ and Death prepares to oppose him; when Victory, always at-

“ tendant on the Messiah, meets Death, and, after a contest,  
 “ annihilates or overwhelms him. Satan addresses the Messiah,  
 “ but falls, nevertheless, the last of his crew. Messiah drives them  
 “ before him to the abyss. Satan again attempts to rally; but  
 “ his crew have left him. Messiah commissions Michael to bind  
 “ down Satan, and returns to Heaven with his Saints.

#### “ BOOK XI.

“ Sin having travelled from earth, arrives at Hell at the time  
 “ Satan is on his fall from Heaven. The contemplation of Sin  
 “ over her victims. Hears the noise of the fall of Satan and his  
 “ army, and receives him at the gates of Hell. Michael arrives,  
 “ and prepares to execute his commission. Conference between  
 “ Sin, Satan, and Michael. Their terrible contest. Michael,  
 “ girt with divine power, hurls them victoriously down the abyss.  
 “ Binds Satan with a chain of adamant. The farewell addresses of  
 “ each; and the tremendous closing the gates of the bottomless  
 “ pit.

#### “ BOOK XII.

“ Michael returns, and Messiah ascends with glory to Heaven.  
 “ Assembles the Saints, and conducts them to the throne of his  
 “ Father. Gives up the kingdom, and sits at the right hand of  
 “ JEHOVAH; who creates a new heaven and earth for the recep-  
 “ tion of other beings of perfect happiness, and illumines the  
 “ whole with the radiance of the Shechinah. Blesses the whole,  
 “ retires to the throne of his happiness and eternal glory.”

Such are the sketch and outline of this great and arduous undertaking, upon which Mr. Townsend is now beginning to work *inter silvas Academi*, on the banks of Cam, having lately been admitted as a member of Trinity College, the Alma Mater of so many learned and illustrious men.

He has written out 186 lines from his memory, without the correction of a single word, and given them to me as a specimen of his first attempt in blank heroic verse; and though, in their present wild incipient state, they cannot be supposed fit to meet the eye of the critic, till the hand of criticism has been upon them, yet as I gave a few passages from Baron Sonnenberg's *Donatoa*, which I put into metre from a literal translation, I think I ought in like manner to select a few of Mr.

Townsend's lines, merely as a sample of his imagery rather than of his versification, which as yet has not received its first smoothing, much less its final polish.

After his invocation, he locates *Armageddon*, which gives the title to his poem—

“ Amidst the regions of remotest space,  
 “ Between the bounds of Nature and the gates  
 “ Of Heav'n's high mansion—”

—“ Dark, gloomy, wild, obscure, which hideous night  
 “ And banish'd Chaos occupy, since God  
 “ With mighty voice had hurl'd them from their realms.”

—“ There shall the Judge of men, the quick, the dead,  
 “ Appear; and Heaven's assembled hosts shall see  
 “ The solemn day when God shall judge the world,  
 “ And reconcile his justice and his love—”

He describes the angels, sent forth by the mandate of the Almighty, to descend upon the earth—

—“ And with the storms enchain'd,  
 “ Bear up the living race of all mankind  
 “ To wait the Saviour's near approach—”

This mandate is not orally delivered by the Almighty, but by the attendant spirit,

“ Who near his lofty throne perpetual watch  
 “ Had kept through all eternity, and knew  
 “ The secret signs of the Almighty will—”

This spirit of divine intelligence, who waited

“—Within the fiery orb,  
 “ That girt the Majesty of darkness round—”

(Our poet not presuming to dictate words for the Almighty) communicates the decree to the angels in the following bold and energetic strain, which I give to the reader, as Mr. Townsend did to me, in the first flow of his thoughts, not as yet attending to the transposition or correction of a single word—



" Princes, and Cherubim, seraphic sons  
 " Of your Creator's will, our Father's word  
 " Omnipotent hath pass'd, that from your ranks  
 " A chosen embassy proceed to earth,  
 " Gather the storms, and bind the whirlwind's power,  
 " The fire-fraught hurricane, the sweeping blast  
 " Ontrageous, in your grasp, restrain their rage,  
 " Retaining all their strength, and deep involv'd  
 " In cloud confine the raging elements,  
 " That roar throughout the wide expanse, and form  
 " Chaotic ruin in earth's concave orb—" &c.

The spirit having fulfilled his commission, our poet proceeds—

" He said ; and forth, in radiant order rang'd,  
 " A shining host of Cherubim obey  
 " The mandate ; clad in panoply divine,  
 " Refulgent, splendid, beauteous, on they come—"

A little further on he says—

" —For round our path and bed and private ways  
 " *Angels* for ever watch unseen, protect  
 " Us, when we fall, attendant ministers,  
 " Gifted with high commission from above :  
 " *Angels* remark our secret crimes, and grave  
 " The painful record on th' eternal book  
 " With tears of sorrow : *Angels* mark our deeds  
 " Acceptable, and wing with swiftest joy  
 " Their speedy way, exulting when they see,  
 " As erst in Paradise, mankind renew  
 " Their antient concord with the hosts of Heav'n :  
 " *Angels* attend the dying bed, sweet peace  
 " They whisper to the trembling breast, and calm  
 " The restless sufferer ; and, when the soul  
 " Bursts from its earthly tenement, convey  
 " The raptur'd spirit on their gladsome wings  
 " Swift to JEHOVAH's throne, and hail serene  
 " The new possessor of th' etherial soil,  
 " Friend and companion in eternal bliss—  
 " Not thus invisible, but in their own  
 " Immortal and orig'nal glory clad,  
 " Afar they beam'd intolerable day  
 " Throughout the concave frame, as down from heav'n's  
 " Refulgent portals each pursued his way,  
 " Enter'd created space, and saw the world  
 " A shining atom in the wide expanse—" &c.

The critic no doubt discovers where the correcting pen ought to go in these unfinished passages, and so I trust does the poet.

I once more entreat my readers to put a liberal and kind interpretation upon the whole of this article, by which my object is to avail myself of the present, and perhaps the only, opportunity, that is allotted to me, of recommending to their notice and protection a youth, whose talents are his only patrimony, and whose moral virtues (not always associated with genius) entitle him to be as much respected and esteemed by those, who know him, as he is admired and praised.

RICHARD CUMBERLAND.

MARMION, A TALE OF FLODDEN FIELD. BY WALTER SCOTT, ESQ.—*Printed by Ballantyne and Co. for Constable and Co. Edinburgh; Miller, Albemarle-street; and Murray, London.*—4to, 1l. 11s. 6d.; 8vo, 12s.

AMONG the poets of the time we live in, few are more entitled to notice, either by their beauties or by their blemishes, than the author of the work that is now to be considered: for while he possesses a genius that might adorn the best age of literature, he is reviving that vicious style, which has already operated, with so irresistible a weight, to sink the early writers in oblivion.

If, in order to ascertain the first source of these evils, a careful and public-spirited reader should examine into the reasons, which may have induced Mr. Scott to adopt so erroneous a system, this reader would be likely to conclude, that a want of precision in thinking may originally have been the

cause of all the mischief. Mr. Scott informs us, that his course of study has led him to admire the writing of the ancient poets; and he has apparently failed to distinguish which amongst the ingredients in that writing have raised his admiration. Possibly he may not have perceived, that what has pleased him in such works, has pleased him rather in spite, than by favour, of the diction: and, having remarked uncouth expression almost universally coupled with the beautiful poetry of the early writers, perhaps he has involuntarily fancied, that where uncouth expression appeared, there beautiful poetry must always be found. The rude nature of the subjects, which he has chosen to treat, may be supposed to have promoted and strengthened the mistake: for the association between unpolished manners and unpolished language would naturally act upon the mind of an author, investigating and recounting such histories as those of the antient borderers. One may conceive Mr. Scott, before he became known as a poet, to have been strongly impressed with all these feelings, and to have been aware how great an attention was likely to be excited by a species of composition, which, if the foundations of it were not in the nineteenth century absolutely original, had at least been so long disused, and was now reproduced with so much new modulation of his own, as to bear the face of novelty. And, when all these probable reasons have been considered, his anomalies, though not at all more venial, may appear a little less unaccountable.

The great reputation that attended "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," was unquestionably adapted, if its author were very sanguine, to flatter him into more such undertakings. But he should have considered, that all which had before been done by his genius and his novelty of style united, must thenceforward be done, if it could be done at all, by his genius alone. For the style no longer had its novelty: and unfortunately it is in itself so faulty, that, when it loses this, it loses its



only charm. Many of the persons, who at first were its warmest admirers, have found, that its tripping irregularity, which is so easy writing, is easy reading too ; and the poet, like the conjurer, is out of credit when his tricks are known. And justly enough : for there seems to be no reason why one man should be distinguished for doing what a hundred of others can do likewise : and though nothing is meritorious merely because it is difficult, yet nothing which is not difficult can long be thought meritorious. This ballad-poetry was admired at first, because it seemed to be both beautiful and difficult : beautiful, because it was new ; and difficult, because the world did not immediately perceive, that many were capable of performing what nobody had happened to perform before. A cooler consideration has succeeded to the enthusiasm which greeted these errors at their outset : they now begin to appear in their true colours. Still they are treated with forbearance, in consideration of the beauties which Mr. Scott has united to them ; and the branches of rotten wood escape the axe, because the vine has interwoven herself so luxuriantly among them.

While the public taste was already in this state of revolution, Mr. Scott, never perhaps imagining the possibility of such a change, produced his *Marmion*. Its reception has of course been less flattering than that of the former poem. But the story and the style of *Marmion* argue a defect of judgment, not a falling off of genius : it is in his deliberative, not in his executive powers, that Mr. Scott appears to fail. Yet every reader, when he beholds an imagination so vigorous and so fertile wasted on this injurious style, must feel a degree of indignation mingled with his regret ; and while he laments to see the rich treasure sinking to the bottom of the deep, he cannot chuse but blame the careless owner, for having trusted such a cargo to a vessel that was not sea-worthy.

Though the first poem of Mr. Scott did excite unusual

attention, and *Marmion* has some admirers, it may be doubted whether another work after the same manner would be read at all. Mr. Scott's fame is chiefly derived from his beautiful, and at the same time faulty, *Lusus Musæ*, "*The Lay of the Last "Minstrel*:" nor has this fame been yet materially diminished. But it is more than probable, that the very peculiarities, which assisted to acquire a reputation for his genius at first, will occasion the loss of that reputation at last. The new, short, royal road, which he has found out, and by which he has ascended to his present eminence, leads to fame; but it does not go on to immortality. The path ceasing, the traveller can pass no further: its soil is too slippery to let him long preserve the same station; and the necessary consequence will be, that he must make up his mind to descend. Every man who admires talent, must wish to see Mr. Scott return immediately and voluntarily to the safe track, for his powers are strong enough to bear him through the journey; but if he will continue to struggle in his original course, he may hereafter seek the beaten way in vain, and fall, like his own wanderer among the rocks of Helvellyn, a melancholy warning for the rashness of future adventurers.

An author is sadly deceived, if he takes the gaze and whisper of the contemporary mob for an earnest of immortality. Such tributes do not confer a legitimate glory even while they last, for generally they are not so truly tributes of admiration as of wonder; and wonder is well defined by Dr. Johnson, to be the effect of novelty upon ignorance. If an Otaheitan queen, arrayed in all her savage finery, could appear in a polite party, she would for a little while attract more observation than the most elegant woman there; but she would not be therefore the best dressed among the ladies. The strain of the early ages has lived out its little existence, and nobody, by reviving it, is very likely to establish his works with future generations; indeed it seems a confusion almost too wild even for the proverbial insanity of poets, to employ the language of our

ancestors for the purpose of addressing our posterity. The antique style has certainly one advantage; that, by professing simplicity, and abjuring all restraint of rule, it exempts the writer from the trouble of exalting his thoughts and purifying his language; but the readers have no concern with the degree of trouble that a work may have cost the writer, and therefore this advantage is to them no advantage at all.

It is to be lamented, that Mr. Scott did not consider these points before he sat down to compose his *Marmion*. Much wiser would have been his course, if he had ceased to waste his strength in the loose embraces of his meretricious phraseologies, and wedded himself to a chaste and regular style. But this poem has internal evidence to prove, that its author has been indulging himself in his literary licentiousness upon principle; and unfortunately his defence of his errors is itself so beautifully erroneous, so dangerously adorned with all the charms of sophistical illustration, that the critic, unless he resolutely bind himself to the mast, will too probably yield to the song of the tempter, and abandon the voyage that his duty commands him to pursue.

This defence is found in the lines introductory to the third Canto, which are addressed to William Erskine, Esquire. Mr. Erskine is supposed to have been reproaching Mr. Scott for his rude and rambling style of poetry, and to have been recommending the study of classical models. Mr. Scott pleads natural inclination and early habits.

PAGE 117, 118.

“ Like April morning clouds, that pass  
 “ With varying shadow o’er the grass,  
 “ And imitate, on field or furrow,  
 “ Life’s chequered scene of joy and sorrow:  
 “ Like streamlet of the mountain North,  
 “ Now in a torrent racing forth,  
 “ Now winding slow its silver train,  
 “ And almost slumbering on the plain:  
 “ Like breezes of the autumn day,  
 “ Whose voice uncertain dies away,



" And ever swells again as fast,  
 " When the ear deems its murmur past;  
 " Thus various, my romantic theme  
 " Flits, winds, or sinks, a morning dream.  
 " Yet pleased, our eye pursues the trace  
 " Of Light and Shade's inconstant race,  
 " Pleased, views the rivulet afar,  
 " Weaving its maze irregular;  
 " And pleased, we listen as the breeze  
 " Heaves its wild sigh through autumn trees,  
 " Then wild as cloud, or stream, or gale,  
 " Flow on, flow unconfined, my tale."

After speaking of his own disposition and education, the poet thus concludes :

" From me, thus nurtured, dost thou ask  
 " The classic poet's well conned task?  
 " Nay, Erskine, nay—on the wild hill  
 " Let the wild heath-bell flourish still:  
 " Cherish the tulip, prune the vine,  
 " But freely let the woodbine twine,  
 " And leave untrimmed the eglantine:  
 " Nay, my friend, nay—since oft thy praise  
 " Hath given fresh vigour to my lays,  
 " Since oft thy judgment could refine  
 " My flattened thought, or eumbrous line,  
 " Still kind, as is thy wont, attend,  
 " And in the minstrel spare the friend.  
 " Though wild as cloud, as stream, as gale,  
 " Flow forth, flow unrestrained, my tale!"—P. 129.

Upon the acceptation of these lines the cause of Mr. Scott must almost entirely depend. And when we strip them of their poetical beauties, what remains? Why, an attempt to gain the sanction of precedent for what, at most, is excuseable only as accident, to establish a rule for the commission of irregularity, and to send the culprit on the road with a prospective pardon in his pocket! It might answer very well to let the Moss-troopers, three hundred years ago, pay their *black mail* for the liberty of going abroad on excursions of mischief: but there is no legitimate mode in which poets can purchase a right of rambling. Mr. Scott tells us that his genius should

be allowed to flourish, as “on the wild hill the wild heath-bell.” This allowance is not to be granted; a wild flower, when properly trained, may become an ornament of the fairest garden, and we cannot but be displeased, when we see, rough and rugged, thin in foliage, and uncertain in colour, those stems and blossoms, which, duly cultured, might rise in smooth and regular luxuriance, swelling in the abundance of their leaves, and brilliant in the richness of their hues!

Diction, as well as the society by which it is invented and employed, has its rise and progress in civilization; and perverse indeed seems to be that taste, which prefers the discord, roughness and redundancy of travelling harpers to the regular metre, smooth versification, and pruned expression of authors, who have treated poetical phraseology as a science, and immortalized themselves by immortalizing the language in which they have written. The modern poets seem to be copying the modern philosophers: for both, alike, would have the public submit to a state of barbarism by way of attaining perfection; and the Hottentot of the wilds of Parnassus is just as good a model as the Hottentot of the Cape of Good Hope. It really seems a little unfair, that after a language has been toiling uphill for centuries, and lifting itself to an elevated station, it should on a sudden be dashed from its honourable eminence, and plunged once again into the mire from which it originally emerged. If Dr. Darwin, by the luxurious delicacy of his refinement, has contributed to render the English verse too dainty and fantastic, what injury must be effected by Mr. Scott, who encourages it to be barbarous and mean!

Notwithstanding the vices of this northern style, those very conspicuous beauties, which have been embroidered upon it, are attracting a crowd of imitators. And here it is easy to see the necessity for treating the errors of a man of genius with more minute severity than those of the vulgar. A person of small capacity may flaunt in his prettinesses, and obtain pardon for his peccadilloes, because the faults of the vulgar

are committed and forgotten ; but genius invariably calls forth copyists, who are confused by the conjunction of beauty with deformity, and mistake the vice for the virtue. So that when insignificant poets write ill, they do no harm except to their publishers ; but when genius is misdirected, it spreads its mischievous effects to an extent absolutely incalculable. The Poet Horace tells us that, because he looked pale, the Roman wittlings used to physic themselves with cummin-seed, in hopes of passing for poets too ; and since Mr. Scott has set the sickly fashion of obsolete English and incorrect metre, all the trumpery versifiers of the day have been leaping back into the language of the fifteenth century, and fancying themselves the peers of Mr. Scott. Though they cannot reach his thoughts, they have reached his style : thus failing to remind us of his merits, but contriving to propagate his defects. From the rugged North, a mountain flood is rushing down upon the plains of taste, and

“ Another deluge learning thus o’erruns.”

Let us oppose a barrier to its impetuous torrent, and try to save our cultivated regions from the ravage of its wide-wasting waters !

The Poem is dedicated to Henry, Lord Montagu. It is composed of six cantos, and each canto is prefaced by a copy of verses, called an Introduction, which is addressed to some friend of the author.

In the first Canto, intitled *The Castle*, Lord Marmion, an Ambassador from Henry VIII. of England to the Scottish King James IV. is received, with his two esquires, and a considerable train, by Sir Hugh the Heron, at Norham Castle, about the autumn of the year 1513. At supper, Marmion asks for a guide to the Scottish court ; a Palmer of a commanding aspect undertakes to conduct him : the whole party retire to rest : and the next morning Marmion departs. There ends the first Canto.



In the second Canto, intitled *The Convent*, an Abbess and some Nuns are described as sailing from the pile of St. Hilda, at Whitby, to the convent of Lindisfarn, in order to try two criminals, according to the Benedictine code. They arrive at the place of destination; and, after much conversation among the Nuns about matters in no-wise concerning the object of the Poem, the Abbess, with two other superiors, descends into a subterraneous vault, to sit in judgment. The criminals are, a nameless Monk and Constance de Beverley, a Nun who has broken her vows. Constance relates, that, for the love of Marmion, she fled from her convent, and followed him as his page; that Marmion transferred his attention to Clara, a fairer and richer lady; that Clara was claimed by De Wilton, a lover, whom Marmion impeached of treason; that the rivals fought, and Marmion conquered; that Clara, to avoid a marriage with Marmion, took refuge in a convent; and that she, Constance, having planned the death of the innocent girl by poison, which the Monk was to administer, is now betrayed by the cowardice of this accomplice. Constance delivers a packet to the Abbess; and having imprecated vengeance on the heads of her judges, is with her companion inclosed within four stone walls, and abandoned to perish. The passing knell tolls.

In the third Canto, intitled *The Hostel, or Inn*, Marmion is described continuing his journey. He comes to an inn, and halts for the night. The Palmer's commanding and mysterious air a little disconcerts Marmion and his train, as they sit round the fire. Fitz Eustace, one of Marmion's esquires, sings a ballad, which was a favourite with Constance when she attended as a page, and which describes the different fates of a true and of a faithless lover. Marmion, at its conclusion, declares that he seemed, during the song, to hear a bell, like that which is tolled for the departing soul of a nun, and asks what it may portend. The Palmer, who has not spoken before during the whole day, answers, according to a popular

superstition—"The death of a dear friend." Marmion's heart sinks within him; he thinks of Constance, whom he has caused to be apprehended, and is stung with remorse for having given her into the hands of the monks, though he does not suspect her life to be in danger. The host presently tells a story of a Scottish king, who fought with an elfin knight, and heard his own fortune told by vanquishing the demon, in the deserted circle of an ancient camp, near this very inn; and again they all retire to rest. Fitz Eustace is awakened in the night by Marmion, who, wishing to view the scene of elfin chivalry, bids the Esquire saddle him his steed. Marmion being equipped, sets off; Fitz Eustace listens till the horse's tramp is out of hearing, not a little surprised at the credulity of such a man as Marmion, and waits till the chief returns, with stains of clay, that prove the horse to have lost his footing. Marmion withdraws in silence, and the Esquire, musing, returns to his place of repose.

In the fourth Canto, intitled *The Camp*, the confusion in the stable gives rise to much discontent and conjecture among the attendants. The whole party pursue their journey, and are met by Sir David Lindesay, Lord Lion King at Arms, who conducts other heraldic officers, and a suitable train, from the Scottish King, to greet Marmion. Sir David declares that James has directed a fit lodging to be provided for Marmion, till his Majesty can find meet time of seeing him. Marmion is obliged to endure this delay; and the Palmer, finding himself no longer required as a guide, is about to retire, when Sir David forbids any of Marmion's band to sever from the train. At Crichtoun Castle, the appointed lodging, Marmion remains two days. On the second evening of his stay, Sir David, after observing that no power could dissuade James from making war against England, tells a story, of a supernatural warning given in vain to the Scottish King; and Marmion, moved by the tale, tells Lindesay the story repeated by the host of the inn. He says nothing of the Palmer, of Con-

stance, or of Clara; but relates, that feverish feelings had deprived him of sleep, and that, riding to the deserted camp, he sounded his bugle; that the blast was faintly returned, and that presently a mounted champion appeared, against whom, with great agitation, he fixed his spear; that he encountered that champion, and fell; that the spectre brandished a sword over his head, while the moon-beam, shining in the victor's face, shewed the features of one who, dead or alive, had reason to be his enemy; that he himself invoked St. George, upon which the conqueror sheathed his sword, remounted, and disappeared. Sir David mentions some similar tales, and next day they set off for Edinburgh. They arrive on Blackford Hill, and see the Borough-Moor covered with the encampments that have been collected for an English war. They converse on the subject of the preparations, and reach the barriers of the camp.

In the beginning of the fifth Canto, intitled *The Court*, the Scottish forces are described. Marmion arrives in the city, with his train, and in the evening is presented to James, amid the gaiety of the Court, where Lady Heron, wife to Sir Hugh, possesses a great influence. The Queen of France too, it is here added, has an ascendance over James; and thus, at the instigation of the Queen, he arms; and thus does he admit Lady Heron, though an English dame, into his counsels, regardless of his own amiable consort, Margaret. Lady Heron plays on the harp, and sings a ballad. The King pays her much attention, and she glances a familiar look at Marmion. This displeases James, who reads Marmion's commission, enumerates some causes of complaint against England, and declares that a herald has borne defiance to Henry. Lord Douglas, Earl of Angus, stands near, who has opposed the war; and the King, as it would be uncourteous to send back Marmion, who is commissioned to stay while the slightest hopes of peace remain, appoints the British chief to sojourn at Tantallon, Douglas's castle, till the return of the herald. In



the course of this speech, the King insinuates that Douglas, unlike his sires, loves better to oppose his sovereign than to face his country's enemies; and directs that some holy maids, taken that morning in a vessel at sea, shall return with Marmion, under convoy of Douglas. Douglas's proud heart swells, and he weeps; the King is touched, and intreats forgiveness. Marmion whispers to the King to take those tears as a warning against hostility; but James is inflexible, and leads off a dance with Lady Heron. The Abbess and Clara, who are among the captive Nuns, feel heavy alarm on discovering that Marmion must be one of their escort. The Abbess meets the Palmer in an open balcony, implores him to deliver a packet to Wolsey, and explains it to contain letters, which Constance, in order to convict De Wilton of treason on Marmion's charge, had formerly forged. Apprehensions are further expressed by the holy mother, that Marmion will, by King Henry's consent, tear Clara from the convent of St. Hilda; and much censure is also cast upon Constance, who did this sin, hoping that, by the knowledge of Marmion's dishonour, she might hold a boundless power over him. While the Abbess is thus addressing the Palmer, a vision is seen upon a tower, of a spectre, citing the chiefs doomed for death in the approaching battle to appear at an unearthly throne. Among the cited number are King James and Marmion. De Wilton too is summoned; but another voice impeaches the summons, and appeals to God. The pageant vanishes; the Abbess is found by her nuns alone and prostrate. And now Douglas, Marmion, and the Palmer, set out for Tantallon, with the nuns following at a little distance, under the care of Fitz Eustace. The Palmer loses his former sullenness, and becomes eager and lightsome. When the Abbess is preparing to return by sea, Fitz Eustace produces "a letter broad," which commands Clara to separate from her conductress, in order that she may go, under Marmion's guidance, to her kinsman, Lord Fitz Clare; and which further directs, that, while they remain in

Scotland, she shall stay under the care of Douglas's lady, at Tantallon. At Tantallon the whole party soon arrive; Marmion resides there some time; but at last, as the tidings of warlike preparations thicken, he resolves to depart.

The sixth Canto is intitled *The Battle*. Clara is described as often wandering alone, near the castle of Tantallon. In one of her walks, she finds some battered armour, which reminds her of De Wilton; she lifts her eyes, and De Wilton is before her! He relates, that he was dragged senseless from the lists where Marmion conquered him, and, on returning to his recollection, found himself on a pallet, in the shed of Austin, his ancient beadsman. That he long indulged despair, but at length recovering, set out in a palmer's weeds, with Austin, and journeyed through many lands. That Austin, dying, had begged as a boon, that the deadliest enemy of De Wilton, if such a one should ever lie conquered beneath De Wilton's brand, might be permitted by the conqueror to retain his life. That he himself still travelled, and, coming to Scotland, became Marmion's guide. He further says, that he meditated revenge against Marmion, in the hostel where they stopped; and then proceeds thus:—

“ A word of vulgar augury,  
 “ That broke from me, I scarce knew why,  
 “ Brought on a village tale :  
 “ Which wrought upon his moody sprite,  
 “ And sent him armed forth by night.  
 “ I borrowed steed and mail,  
 “ And weapons, from his sleeping band ;  
 “ And, passing from a postern door,  
 “ We met, and 'countered hand to hand,  
 “ He fell on Gifford-Moor.  
 “ For the death-stroke my brand I drew,  
 “ (O then my helmed head he knew,  
 “ The palmer's cowl was gone,)  
 “ Then had three inches of my blade  
 “ The heavy debt of vengeance paid ;  
 “ My hand the thought of Austin staid ;  
 “ I left him there alone.  
 “ O good old man ! even from the grave,  
 “ Thy spirit could thy master save :

" If I had slain my foeman, ne'er  
 " Had Whitby's Abbess, in her fear,  
 " Given to my hand this packet dear,  
 " Of power to clear my injured fame,  
 " And vindicate De Wilton's name.  
 " Perchance you heard the Abbess tell  
 " Of the strange pageantry of Hell,  
 " That broke our secret speech—  
 " It rose from the infernal shade,  
 " Or featly was some juggle played,  
 " A tale of peace to teach.  
 " Appeal to Heaven I judged was best,  
 " When my name came among the rest."

P. 327, 328, 329. Canto VI.

He continues to state, that he has related his history to Douglas, who, won by these proofs, is about to dub him knight. That he is himself watching his armour, according to the laws of chivalry, till midnight; and that with morning he shall seek the English camp, commanded by Surrey. He then expresses the hopes that he entertains as a lover, and Clara remonstrates on his eagerness for again encountering the hazards of war; but a feeling for his honour succeeds, and she sympathizes in his ardour. He is knighted, and departs. After an altercation with Douglas, who has now learned the real character of Marmion, the latter sets off with Clara, and misses the Palmer, whose departure in arms is related by the Esquires. Marmion then feels that the real De Wilton was the conqueror, by moonlight on the wold, and understands the reason as well of Douglas's coldness as of the Palmer's dreadful glances. He arrives at a hillock, that overlooks the field of Flodden; on this hillock he leaves Clara to be guarded by the two Esquires, Fitz Eustace and Blount, and joins Lord Surrey. The battle begins. Two horsemen bear a wounded knight up the hill on which Clara is placed; that knight is Marmion! He dispatches the Esquires to the battle; and then, left by his train, and almost fainting, he is relieved with a helm full of water, by Clara, the injured Clara. He is racked with remorse and anxiety, and dies. The English con-



quer ; Clara and De Wilton are united. The Poem concludes with a few lines addressed to the reader.

It is probable, that, in the course of the following criticism, many persons will observe opinions which they have already found in some earlier analysis of *Marmion*. As the poem has been so often reviewed, this cannot be matter of reproach : the most important points are generally the most obvious : and if, at this moment, any critic should profess to give a new account, varying in every particular from all antecedent, it is manifest that such an account must either contain opinions too singular to be credible, or omit many particulars the most essential to a complete criticism. The following pages would be very faulty if they excluded any valuable argument, merely because it had been employed by some previous writer ; but, on the other hand, they are not to be considered as the transcripts of earlier decisions, merely because a similarity of opinion may sometimes be observable.

In considering the story of *Marmion*, it is difficult to find any ground for commendation. Since it does not pretend to the regularity of an Epic Poem, it ought at least to have had the interest of a tolerable Romance. Indeed Mr. Scott, by the advertisement prefixed, declares a hope, that his fable will be found captivating as a narrative ; but probably, by this time, both he and his readers have felt the fallacy of all such expectation. In the first place, the plot is so confused, as to be almost unintelligible at a single perusal : for the author, in his eager desire of throwing his characters into unexpected situations at last, and exciting surprise in the reader, has reduced himself to more awkward evasions of explanation, than ever were invented by a perplexed schoolboy, endeavouring to conceal unlucky facts from his master. And, at last, the desired object fails : for the obscure hints, and mysterious descriptions, which introduce certain disguised characters, such as Constance and De Wilton, awaken a shrewd suspicion of the very facts which they are intended to veil : and, when they

are in fine explained, puzzle the memory without moving the passions. An author, in his ambition of producing dramatic effects, should carefully observe the distinction between mystery and confusion, for an incident does not become interesting by being unintelligible.

What can we say of such an incident as Marmion's battle with De Wilton in the camp circle? There is certainly something exceedingly improbable in the Palmer's utterance of that "vulgar augury," *The death of a dear friend*. In order that we might be impressed with a mysterious idea of the Palmer's dignity, he had been made to preserve an uninterrupted silence for the whole day; and yet, when he did at length speak, he spoke, as he himself afterwards told Clara, "he knew not why!" However, though he did not know what he meant himself, Marmion did; and these idle words, which would have produced rather an extraordinary coincidence in any body's mouth, and which it seems absolutely impossible for that Palmer to have spoken, sent out the gallant Marmion on horseback in the night. And even if Marmion's excursion were credible to the reader, how did De Wilton, unless, indeed, he were endued with a gift of prophecy, contrive to discover Marmion's departure, to prepare himself, and to arrive on the ground in time for this fight? But, at last, what is the issue of the adventure? Why, that one knight is pushed down and gets up again, and the other rides away, content with the pleasure of boasting his victory. It may be said, that "it was necessary to bring Marmion safe into Edinburgh, in order that the abbess might there prove his guilt, by giving the packet to De Wilton, which she would otherwise have had no opportunity of doing." Yes, as the author has now constituted his poem, it was necessary; but why does an author constitute a poem in such a manner as to make it necessary that a principal incident shall be of such a nature as neither to promote nor to retard the catastrophe, nor, indeed, to produce any single assistance to his story, except a long and

heavy explanation?—Again, how blameable is the introduction of the vision at Edinburgh! It is true that the Scottish historians mention some illusion of this kind; but a poet should not introduce such a thing in his fable, unless he explain it either as a trick, or as the work of some supernatural agent concerned in the plot of the poem. And even thus it would be of no use here, for, at last, it occasions nothing. Apparently it has been the author's chief aim to keep his readers in suspense, as to the event of his narrative. And certainly few persons are likely, before-hand, to know its event; but while it is true that they cannot know, it is no less true that they have no reason to care.

Yet, even if these incidents had been developed with all possible art, still, perhaps, the story would not have been captivating; for though it is a frequent usage, among dramatists and other poets, to crowd their works with incident, yet mere incident is nothing, unless it produce some interesting situation. Now there are very few situations into which a human being can be thrown, that are strong enough to be interesting in themselves; and where a situation does interest powerfully, it becomes interesting, in most cases, by the characters of the persons concerned. It is, therefore, the first duty of a poet, to make his readers care about his heroes; and if he does not originally accomplish that important object, he will find a strange damp and flatness even in those situations which might have been rendered the most affecting. Hardly a newspaper is published that does not afford examples of this precept. There was an equal distress in the fates to which Bonaparte condemned the Printer of Nuremberg and the Duc d'Enghien: but the calamities of Palm were related and forgotten, because he was then first presented to the public attention; while the history of Louis Antoine was scarcely heard without tears, because his character had been previously known and admired. But we feel no sympathy with De Wilton and Clara, who, though they are the hero and he-



roine, have a thorough insipidity of character; and, as this sympathy is wanting, of course the troubles in which they are engaged do not at all affect our minds. Nay, it seems probable that most readers would not care for any of the agents in this work, so much as for Marmion himself. And him it is impossible to like very earnestly, when one considers his conduct toward Constance and Clara; for, however general may be a dishonourable behaviour to women, there is no sin which will not rather be excused in the hero of a romance—even the sneaking and unknightly trick of the forged letters would sooner be forgiven.

Perhaps, as far as the fable is concerned, the most praiseworthy invention is that of Constance's trial. There is something superior to the ordinary course of story-writing, something really dramatic in this situation of the unhappy girl with her judges and executioners; and it is almost the only portion of the Poem where any thing like a strong situation can be found. But even here, Mr. Scott, in attempting to surprise his readers, produces a very inconsistent series of effects on their minds. After naming the victim, he describes her in these words:

“ When thus her face was given to view,  
 “ (Although so pallid was her hue,  
 “ It did a ghastly contrast bear,  
 “ To those bright ringlets glistening fair,)  
 “ Her look composed, and steady eye,  
 “ Bespoke a matchless constancy;  
 “ And there she stood, so calm and pale,  
 “ That, but her breathing did not fail,  
 “ And motion, slight of eye, and head,  
 “ And of her bosom, warranted,  
 “ That neither sense nor pulse she lacks,  
 “ You might have thought a form of wax,  
 “ Wrought to the very life, was there;  
 “ So still she was, so pale, so fair.”

P. 100. Canto II.

“ And now that blind old Abbot rose,  
 “ To speak the Chapter's doom,  
 “ On those the wall was to enclose,  
 “ Alive, within the tomb;

" But stopped, because that woeful maid,  
 " Gathering her powers, to speak essayed.  
 " Twice she essayed, and twice in vain ;  
 " Her accents might no utterance gain ;  
 " Nought but imperfect murmurs slip  
 " From her convulsed and quivering lip :  
 " 'Twixt each attempt all was so still,  
 " You seemed to hear a distant rill—

\* \* \* \*

" At length, an effort sent apart  
 " The blood that curdled to her heart,  
 " And light came to her eye,  
 " And colour dawned upon her cheek,  
 " A hectic and a fluttered streak,  
 " Like that left on the Cheviot peak,  
 " By Autumn's stormy sky ;  
 " And when her silence broke at length,  
 " Still as she spoke, she gathered strength,  
 " And armed herself to bear.  
 " It was a fearful sight to see  
 " Such high resolve and constancy,  
 " In form so soft and fair."

P. 104, 105. Canto II.

After all this, it is natural to expect that Constance is some innocent and amiable girl, resigning herself to unmerited, but unavoidable woe. A surprise takes place, to be sure, when she acknowledges herself to have broken her vows, committed forgery, and attempted murder ; but the description of her manner is inconsistent with her character, and the surprise is not by any means agreeable. Though there is something pleasant in the surprise that we feel when the accused give glorious proof of innocence, yet, to find the most atrocious vice in a creature for whom we are preparing to interest ourselves, can never gratify the good feelings of our nature. The Sun delights us when he breaks through heavy clouds ; but who is pleased to see a murky fog overspread the transparent azure of heaven ?

Still, though the plot appears to be defective in these particulars—though the spark of poetry creeps through the greater part of the narrative with a chill and smouldering progress—yet,

at the end of its course, it suddenly bursts into flame, and blazes with a splendour that seldom has been equalled. The English forces are opposed to their foes at Flodden; and Mr. Scott, rising with the grandeur of his subject, now sweeps the strings of his harp, in an almost uninterrupted strain of magnificence, even till his minstrelsy approaches its end. The following extracts will seem long to none, but those who criticise, like the blockhead in Sterne, by the stop-watch.

XX.

“ And why stands Scotland idly now,  
 “ Dark Flodden! on thy airy brow,  
 “ Since England gains the pass the while,  
 “ And struggles through the deep defile?  
 “ What checks the fiery soul of James?  
 “ Why sits that champion of the dames  
 “ Inactive on his steed,  
 “ And sees between him and his land,  
 “ Between him and Tweed’s southern strand,  
 “ His host Lord Surrey lead?  
 “ What vails the vain knight-errant’s brand?—  
 “ O, Douglas! for thy leading wand!  
 “ Fierce Randolph! for thy speed  
 “ O, for one hour of Wallace wight,  
 “ Or well-skilled Bruce, to rule the fight,  
 “ And cry—‘ Saint Andrew and our right!’  
 “ Another sight had seen that morn,  
 “ From Fate’s dark book a leaf been torn,  
 “ And Flodden had been Bannockbourne!”

Marmion joins the English general, and posts the esquires on a neighbouring height, with Clara. These esquires are described as beholding the battle, which begins with a tremendous shock and confusion.

“ Then marked they, dashing broad and far,  
 “ The broken billows of the war,  
 “ And plumed crests of chieftains brave  
 “ Floating like foam upon the wave;  
 “ But nought distinct they see:  
 “ Wide raged the battle on the plain;  
 “ Spears shook, and faulchions flash’d amain;  
 “ Fell England’s arrow-flight like rain;  
 “ Crests rose, and stooped, and rose again,  
 “ Wild and disorderly.

P. 356, 357. Canto VI.



The esquires mingle in the combat, and Clara remains alone on the hill. Thither two horsemen bring Marmion wounded and dying.

“ They parted, and alone he lay ;  
 “ Clare drew her from the sight away,  
 “ Till pain wrung forth a lowly moan,  
 “ And half he murmured—‘ Is there none,  
 “ ‘ Of all my halls have nurst,  
 “ ‘ Page, squire, or groom, one cup to bring,  
 “ ‘ Of blessed water from the spring,  
 “ ‘ To slake my dying thirst?’

## XXXI.

“ O, woman ! in our hours of ease,  
 “ Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,  
 “ And variable as the shade  
 “ By the light-quivering aspen made ;  
 “ When pain and anguish wring the brow,  
 “ A ministering angel thou !  
 “ Scarce were the piteous accents said,  
 “ When, with the Baron’s casque, the maid  
 “ To the nigh streamlet ran :  
 “ Forgot were hatred, wrongs, and fears ;  
 “ The plaintive voice alone she hears,  
 “ Sees but the dying man.  
 “ She stooped her by the runnel’s side,  
 “ But in abhorrence backward drew ;  
 “ For, oozing from the mountain wide,  
 “ Where raged the war, a dark red tide  
 “ Was curdling in the streamlet blue.  
 “ Where shall she turn !—behold her mark  
 “ A little fountain cell,  
 “ Where water, clear as diamond-spark,  
 “ In a stone bason fell.  
 “ Above, some half-worn letters say,  
 “ ‘ Drink, weary pilgrim, drink, and pray  
 “ ‘ For the kind soul of Sybil Grey,  
 “ ‘ Who built this cross and well.’

P. 362, 363. Canto VI

She brings the water to Marmion, whom she finds supported by a pious monk. He is anxious to redress the wrongs of Constance, and, when he learns her story from Clara, his conscience is dreadfully agitated.

“ The war, that for a space did fail,  
 “ Now trebly thundering swelled the gale,

" And--Stanley! was the cry;  
 " A light on Marmion's visage spread,  
 " And fired his glazing eye:  
 " With dying hand, above his head  
 " He shook the fragment of his blade,  
 " And shouted---' Victory!...  
 " ' Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!  
 " Were the last words of Marmion."

## XXXIV.

" By this, though deep the evening fell,  
 " Still rose the battle's deadly swell,  
 " For still the Scots, around their king,  
 " Unbroken fought in desperate ring.  
 " Where's now their victor vaward wing?  
 " Where Huntley, and where Home?  
 " O for a blast of that dread horn  
 " On Fontarabian echoes borne,  
 " That to King Charles did come,  
 " When Rowland brave, and Olivier,  
 " And every paladin and peer,  
 " On Roncesvalles died!  
 " Such blast might warn them, not in vain,  
 " To quit the plunder of the slain,  
 " And turn the doubtful day again,  
 " While yet, on Flodden side,  
 " Afar, the royal standard flies,  
 " And round it toils, and bleeds, and dies,  
 " Our Caledonian pride!"

The Monk conducts Clara to a place of safety:

" But as they left the darkening heath,  
 " More desperate grew the strife of death.  
 " The English shafts in volleys hailed,  
 " In headlong charge their horse assailed,  
 " Front, flank, and rear, their squadrons sweep,  
 " To break the Scottish circle deep,  
 " That fought around their king.  
 " But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,  
 " Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,  
 " Though bill-men plie the ghastly blow,  
 " Unbroken was the ring:  
 " The stubborn spear-men still made good  
 " Their dark impenetrable wood,  
 " Each stepping where his comrade stood,  
 " The instant that he fell.  
 " No thought was there of dastard flight;  
 " Linked in the serried phalanx tight,  
 " Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,  
 " As fearlessly and well;

"Till utter darkness closed her wing  
 "O'er their thin host and wounded king.  
 "Then skilful Surrey's sage commands  
 "Led back from strife his shattered bands;  
 "And from the charge they drew,  
 "As mountain-waves, from wasted lands,  
 "Sweep back to ocean blue.  
 "Then did their loss his foemen know;  
 "Their king, their lords, their mightiest low,  
 "They melted from the field as snow,  
 "When streams are swoln, and South-winds blow,  
 "Dissolves in silent dew.  
 "Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash  
 "Of many a broken band,  
 "Disordered through her currents dash,  
 "To gain the Scottish land;  
 "To town and tower, to down and dale,  
 "To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,  
 "And raise the universal wail.  
 "Tradition, legend, tune, and song,  
 "Shall many an age that wail prolong:  
 "Still from the sire the son shall hear  
 "Of the stern strife, and carnage drear,  
 "Of Flodden's fatal field,  
 "Where shivered was fair Scotland's spear,  
 "And broken was her shield!--P. 368, 369, 370.

The grandeur of certain subjects is capable of more than one mode of poetical expression; and thus, situations of a nature strictly analogous are described in a most dissimilar manner by Milton and Shakspeare. If Milton describes a battle, he describes it by a general pomp of style, and an occasional introduction of magnificent passages. If Shakspeare has a battle to be described, he does not raise his expressions beyond that ordinary elevation which all serious poetry requires, and he inserts few passages that would be individually striking; but when the reader has perused the whole scene, he feels his mind interested, expanded, enraptured, by the Poet's power, and is delighted more by the easy and sustained beauty and greatness of the whole, than by the dazzling glories of single parts. In the description of Flodden fight, Mr. Scott has modelled himself rather by Shakspeare than by Milton; and he has made a choice admirably adapted both to the



purest principles of taste, and to the display of his own peculiar talents. It would be extravagant praise to say that he is the equal of Shakspeare. Shakspeare, indeed, excelled in grand epic description, and so does Mr. Scott; both have shewn the noblest powers of historical painting; yet Shakspeare's poetry governed the breast, not only by a sort of concurrent jurisdiction with the art of historical painting, but by further and higher powers, by those additional and paramount advantages which the poet must be acknowledged to possess above the painter. Still, as far as the genius for this particular order of poetry extends, (and a wide, a glorious extent it surely has,) there will scarcely be any injustice in giving equal admiration, to the Dramatist of Bosworth-field and to the Minstrel of Flodden fight.

After an examination of the plot, it is the natural course to consider the characters as they stand distinguished from each other. This is an enquiry very different from that examination of character which was made with respect to the interest imparted by the agents to the plot, to the incidents, and to the situations: for it is possible that a great number of persons might be described in a poem, none of whom should be pleasing enough to excite that interest which ought to exist for the heroes of romance, and yet all of whom should be forcibly, subtilely, and naturally distinguished from each other in character. In this art of delineating character with accuracy and distinctness, Mr. Scott gives several examples of his ability; but he seems to have taken more pains with the characters of his episodical and inferior people, than with those of his principal agents. Marmion and De Wilton, if their characters be strictly analysed, will perhaps appear to be persons little different in natural disposition, though they produce very different effects upon the reader. The difference of these effects upon the reader seems to arise from circumstances, rather than temper. Both are hard, stern, yet not unfeeling men; but Marmion has been assailed by temptation, while De Wilton has been tutored in the school of adversity; of course the

conduct of the two warriors becomes very dissimilar, though their characters may have been originally alike. Clara resembles the heroines of the common novels; and Constance is exactly what Matilda in "The Monk" would have been, if Matilda had not turned out to be the devil. But there is a very agreeable discrimination between the characters of the two esquires. Blount is an unpolished, bluff man, with a good heart. The more gentle temperament of Eustace may be gathered from the following pretty lines:—

" Apart, and nestling in the hay  
 " Of a waste loft, Fitz Eustace lay;  
 " Scarce, by the pale moonlight, was seen  
 " The folding of his mantle green:  
 " Lightly he dreamt, as youth will dream,  
 " Of sport by thicket, or by stream,  
 " Of hawk or hound, of ring or glove,  
 " Or lighter yet, of lady's love." P. 162. Canto III.

The accounts concerning the garrulous Abbess are not, indeed, entitled to any praise; nor can we say much in favour of the passages that relate to Sir David Lindesay and Sir Hugh the Heron; but the court of King James, the spirit and manners of the monarch himself, the naughtiness of the pretty Lady Heron, the rough and dignified honour of Douglas, are described with an accurate and admirable observation of nature.

There is one great and glaring fault which pervades the whole of this work: and that fault is, the tiresome minuteness with which every object, however insignificant, is described. There is a certain degree of accuracy which may be very interesting; but it should be an accuracy which relates to an interesting object. When a principal character is introduced, as, for instance here, Lord Marmion, the greatest possible accuracy of description is allowable, and even admirable; but nobody wishes a writer to specify the dresses and appearances of all the heralds and yeomen who may have half a dozen words to say in a long poem. Can any reader be pleased with such items as the following?—

" First came the trumpets, at whose clang  
 " So late the forest echoes rang;

" On prancing steeds they forward press'd,  
 " With scarlet mantle, azure vest ;  
 " Each at his trump a banner wore,  
 " Which Scotland's royal scutcheon bore :  
 " Heralds and pursuivants, by name  
 " Bute, Islay, Marchmont, Rothsay, came,  
 " In painted tabards, proudly showing  
 " Gules, Argent, Or, and Azure glowing,  
 " Attendant on a king-at-arms,  
 " Whose hand the armorial truncheon held,  
 " That feudal strife had often quelled,  
 " When wildest its alarms."

## VII.

\* \* \* \* \*

" On milk-white palfrey forth he paced,  
 " His cap of maintenance was graced  
 " With the proud Heron-plume.  
 " From his steed's shoulder, loin, and breast,  
 " Silk housings swept the ground,  
 " With Scotland's arms, device, and crest,  
 " Embroidered round and round.  
 " The double tressure might you see,  
 " First by Achaius borne,  
 " The thistle and the fleur-de-lis,  
 " And gallant unicorn.  
 " So bright the King's armorial coat,  
 " That scarce the dazzled eye could note,  
 " In living colours, blazoned brave,  
 " The Lion, which his title gave.  
 " A train which well beseeemed his state,  
 " But all unarmed, around him wait.  
 " Still is thy name in high account,  
 " And still thy verse has charms,  
 " Sir David Lindesay of the Mount,  
 " Lord Lion King-at-arms!"

P. 191—193. Canto IV.

The last line, by-the-bye, is a notable example of the bathos, and resembles nothing so much as the celebrated couplet—

And thou, Dalhousie, the great god of war,  
 Lieutenant-Colonel to the Earl of Mar !

On the same principles as those which ought to direct the details relating to characters, the details relating to places should also be directed. When, for the first time, a spot is mentioned, which is to become the scene of some great and



striking event, as for instance here, the vault in which Constance is immured, accuracy of description increases the interest and reality of effect ; but who desires to know whether Tantallon castle had square turrets, stony shields with bloody hearts and mullets, stairs, steps, parapets, platforms, bulwarks, bartisans, bastions, and vantage-coigns ? An excellent artist has said, that the slightest circumstance which can assist the expression of a portrait, should be carefully preserved ; but the same artist adds, that he who, in a landscape, introduces a figure angling, must not trouble himself to represent the float of cork at the point of the fishing-line. Details in an old work, though they may be tastelessly minute, are sometimes pleasant enough, because they elucidate ancient manners ; but it has been well observed, that, in a modern story, they are of no value for the purpose of information, because they can be no longer authentic ; and of no chivalrous interest, because they appertain to nothing above common matters, such as eating, drinking, and dressing, which are not at all peculiar to chivalry.

But there are, in *Marmion*, several descriptions, so strictly conducive to the general objects of the poem, and, at the same time, so strikingly beautiful, that Mr. Scott may almost be said to have here shewn still greater descriptive powers than those which he manifested in his last poem. The vault in which Constance suffers condemnation, is painted thus :—

“ In low dark rounds the arches hung,  
 “ From the rude rock the side-walls sprung ;  
 “ The grave-stones, rudely sculptured o’er,  
 “ Half sunk in earth, by time half wore,  
 “ Were all the pavement of the floor ;  
 “ The mildew drops fell one by one,  
 “ With tinkling splash, upon the stone.  
 “ A cresset, in an iron chain,  
 “ Which served to light this drear domain,  
 “ With damps and darkness seemed to strive,  
 “ As if it scarce might keep alive ;  
 “ And yet it dimly served to show  
 “ The awful conclave met below.” P. 96,67. Canto II.

The lines that recount the tolling of the bell, for the spirits

of the victims, are certainly among the most beautiful passages of English poetry :—

“ So far was heard the mighty knell,  
 “ The stag sprung up on Cheviot Fell,  
 “ Spread his broad nostril to the wind,  
 “ Listed before, aside, behind;  
 “ Then couched him down beside the hind,  
 “ And quaked among the mountain fern,  
 “ To hear that sound so dull and stern.”

P. 112, 113. Canto II.

But perhaps the most sustained and perfect piece of description is the picture of Edinburgh and the Borough-Moor, as they are seen from the heights of Blackford. It is unfortunately too long to be inserted here.

The sensations of Clara and De Wilton, at their unexpected interview, are very poetically told, and may serve to shew the powers of the author's imagination.

The same merit is conspicuous in the song that Fitz Eustace sings to Marmion at the inn.

In the course of the Poem occur also several passages of a sweet and tender feeling. Fitz Eustace's melody, for instance, is characterised in some lines, of which the only material fault is the inharmoniousness of the names; but of which the beauties must be too obvious to require a comment.

And, in order to conclude this long series of extracts, it will not be improper to add the exquisite lines relating to Marmion's grave :—

“ Less easy task it were to shew  
 “ Lord Marmion's nameless grave, and low :  
 “ They dug his grave e'en where he lay,  
 “ But every mark is gone ;  
 “ Time's wasting hand has done away  
 “ The simple cross of Sybil Grey,  
 “ And broke her font of stone ;  
 “ But yet from out the little hill  
 “ Oozes the slender springlet still.  
 “ Oft halts the stranger there ;  
 “ For thence may best his curious eye  
 “ The memorable field descry ;  
 “ And shepherd boys repair,  
 “ To seek the water-flag and rush,

“ And rest them by the hazel-bush,  
 “ And plait their garlands fair ;  
 “ Nor dream they sit upon the grave  
 “ That holds the bones of Marmion brave.

P. 374, 375. Canto VI.

Mr. Scott must be blamed for his constant attempts at shewing his own thorough acquaintance with the lore of authors generally unknown, and with the topography of the north country. Instances of these errors will be found in the tedious tale of Sir David Lindesay, in the histories of St. Hilda, in the fable of St. Cuthbert's maritime coffin, in the minutes of the coasting voyage sailed by the nuns of St. Whitby, and in numerous other passages gratuitously introduced into the narrative of the poem. The allusions to old legends must be tiresome to every body except romance-readers, and the versified localities of the North must be disagreeable to all but Scotchmen and borderers. The other gentlemen of the North would do well in observing this hint; we have had quite enough of the river Tweed and the Cheviot mountains; and these names are now become as familiar as those of Highgate-hill and the Paddington Canal. A romance is not to be estimated like a colonial discovery, by its abundance of wood and water. But it unfortunately happens, that an author often forms too narrow a notion of his readers, and expects that their bosoms will feel a concern for every thing that a casual association has made interesting to his own.

Mr. Scott has not been much more fortunate in the majority of the moral remarks with which his work is interspersed, and which really are sad common-place. Sir David Lindesay, viewing the camp, observes,—

“ Fair is the sight—and yet, ’twere good  
 “ That kings would think *withal*,  
 “ When peace and wealth their land *has* blessed,  
 “ ’Tis better to sit *still at rest*,  
 “ Than rise, *perchance to fall*.”

P. 218. Canto IV.

In speaking of Marmion's conscience, Mr. Scott remarks :



“ Thus oft it haps, that when within  
 “ They shrink at sense of secret sin,  
 “ A feather daunts the brave;  
 “ A fool’s wild speech confounds the wise,  
 “ And proudest princes veil their eyes,  
 “ Before their meanest slave.” P. 146. Canto III.

The same sort of flat sentiment is to be found in the reflections on the Palmer’s first appearance; in the parallel between lions and men, which is introduced during the relation of Constance’s trial; in the invective against the Monk, by whom Constance is betrayed; in the soliloquy of Marmion at the hostel fire; in the apology that follows the description of Marmion’s grave; and in various other passages, where simplicity seems to have been intended.

The foregoing observations apply only to the matter of which this poem is composed; what immediately follows, is directed to the consideration rather of the manner in which the composition has been executed. And here will be seen, in its fullest extent, the radical viciousness of the barbarous style.

The instances of bad English, and bad grammar, are of almost unceasing occurrence, and are frequently occasioned merely by the affectation of the sing-song phraseology. We perpetually find such errors as—

“ His sandals were with travel *tore*—”  
 P. 50. Canto I.

Again :

“ These executioners were *chose*—”  
 P. 102. Canto II.

And there is a constant contortion of the imperfect, in the verbs which terminate in “ *ing*,” as by the substitution of *sprung* for *sprang*.

The phrase, “ *in place*,” means *instead*; but Mr. Scott employs it as if it meant *into a place*:

“ The summoned Palmer came *in place*.”  
 P. 49. Canto I.

There is such an expression in our language, as *Woe is me*:

which may perhaps be explained, *woe is to me*, the preposition *to* being understood, and the accusative case remaining ; but what is the grammatical construction of

“ Woe were *we* each one ? ”—P. 44. Canto I.

Mr. Scott is in the habit of mixing present and past tenses, without the least remorse ; as in this passage :

“ ‘ Would,’ *thought* he, as the picture *grows*,  
“ ‘ I on its stalk had left the rose ! ’ ”  
P. 149. Canto III.

In the concluding address to his readers, the poet wishes,

“ To statesman grave, if such may deign  
“ To read the minstrel’s idle strain,  
“ Sound head, clean hand, and piercing wit,  
“ And patriotic heart—as Pitt ! ”  
P. 376. Canto VI.

Surely he means, not “ *as Pitt*,” but *as Pitt’s*.

The language is not only full of bad English and bad grammar, but it really is sometimes almost unintelligible. On arriving at the lines :

“ O good old man ! even from the grave,  
“ Thy spirit could thy master save : ”  
P. 328. Canto VI.

one must consider some time, before it will be evident, that the old man is not said to have, by warning, saved his master, even from the grave, but by warning, even from the grave, to have saved his master. Even this is hardly so confused as the description of an abbey :—

“ On the deep walls, the heathen Dane  
“ Had poured his impious rage in vain :  
“ And needful was such strength to these,  
“ Exposed to the tempestuous seas,  
“ Scourged by the wind’s eternal sway,  
“ Open to rovers fierce as they,  
“ Which could twelve hundred years withstand  
“ Winds, waves, and northern pirates’ hand.”

It absolutely requires a great deal of study, to perceive, that, in this sentence, the word *these* applies to the walls : *they*, to

the seas and winds, and the concluding *which* to the walls once more.

Another fault, that may be objected to the style of Marmion, is the incomparable meanness which the poet often adopts, in his extravagant passion for the simplicity of the early ballad-writers: among the Highland regiments, says he:

“ With their cries discordant mixed,  
“ Grumbled and yelled the pipes betwixt.”  
P. 248. Canto V.

With the same humility of expression:

“ ‘ Stint in thy prate,’ quoth Blount; ‘ thou’dst best.’ ”  
P. 348.

Thus also:

“ ‘ Unnurtured Blount, thy brawling cease:  
“ ‘ He opes his eyes,’ said Eustace; ‘ peace!’ ”  
P. 360.

Thus, though less offensively, yet, without doubt, meanly:

“ Soon as they neared his turrets strong,”  
P. 88. Canto II.

A fault of a very similar nature, is doggrel versification, such as:

“ Thus the Lindesay spoke:—  
“ Thus clamour still the war-notes *when*  
“ The king to mass his way has *ta’en*,  
“ Or to St. Catherine of *Sienne*,  
“ Or chapel of St. Rocque.”—P. 220. Canto VI.

So too:

“ But thanks to Heaven, and good Saint Chad,  
“ A guerdon meet the spoiler had!”  
P. 372. Canto VI.

The unnatural transpositions of words are not less frequent than disagreeable:

“ These executioners were chose,  
“ *As men who were with mankind foes.*”  
P. 102. Canto II.

In like manner:

“ This caitiff monk, for gold, did swear,  
“ He would to Whitby’s shrine repair,



“ And, by his drugs, my rival fair  
 “ A saint in heaven should be.”

P. 108. Canto II.

Precedents may probably be found, and quoted as authorities for many of the foregoing errors; but it is better to forget such precedents than to produce them.

The lovers of this style seem to have a notion, that words, like coins, are the more valuable, the longer they have ceased to be current: and Mr. Scott, in the true spirit of the sect, overwhelms us with *yode*, and *selle*, and *rede*, and *guerdon*, and *stowre*, and *sheen*, and *bowne*, and others of the same family: not unfrequently relaxing his muse with a whole sentence such as:

“ Who enters at such griesly door,  
 “ Shall ne’er, I ween, find exit more.”

P. 102. Canto II.

There are some lines, that seem to have hardly any meaning at all; and these may be considered among the happiest imitations of the antique minstrelsy. Among them:

“ The Thistle’s knight-companions sate,  
 “ Their banners o’er them *beaming*.”

P. 202. Canto IV.

To the same spirit of parody may probably be referred the tedious and insipid successions of bad prose versified, that stupify even if they do not absolutely offend. Against these the reader will be generally on his guard, by learning that they are to be found through the first, third, and fourth Cantos, almost without any other interruption than that of the descriptions and passages before-mentioned; and not less frequently through the beginning and end of the fifth, and through the earlier part of the sixth. The opening of the first Canto does certainly exhibit some beautiful lines; but they are so remarkably similar to a passage in Mr. Home’s tragedy of *Douglas*, that Mr. Scott will hardly obtain the credit of originality as

to the conception of them. It is worth while to make the comparison :

“ Day set on Norham’s castled steep,  
 “ And Tweed’s fair river, broad and deep,  
     “ And Cheviot’s mountains lone :  
 “ The battled tow’rs, the donjon keep,  
 “ The loop-hole grates where captives weep,  
 “ The flanking walls that round it sweep,  
     “ In yellow lustre shone.  
 “ The warriors on the turrets high,  
 “ Moving athwart the evening sky,  
     “ Seemed forms of giant height :  
 “ Their armour, as it caught the rays,  
 “ Flashed back again the western blaze,  
     “ In lines of dazzling light.

P. 23. Canto I.

Such is Mr. Scott’s very picturesque description: Mr. Home’s lines are these:—

#### DOUGLAS. Act IV.

*Glenalvon.* Has Norval seen the troops?

*Norval.* ————— The setting sun  
 With yellow radiance lightened all the vale :  
 And as the warriors moved, each polished helm,  
 Corslet, or spear, glanced back his gilded beams.  
 The hill they climbed : and, halting at its top,  
 Of more than mortal size, towering, they seemed  
 A host angelic, clad in burning arms !

The introductions have no relation to the main story. They are mere excrescences, and therefore have no claim to a formal and detailed criticism; but it would be unjust to deny that they comprise some passages of great merit. The first is addressed to William Stewart Rose, Esq. Mr. Scott here tells us, that his children ask him in winter, whether spring will return? Yes; answers he, but no spring will ever renew to Britain the Chiefs whom she has lost—and then follow lamentations for Lord Nelson, Mr. Pitt, and Mr. Fox. Mr. Pitt is thus apostrophized :

“ Hadst thou but lived, though stripped of power,  
 “ A watchman on the lonely tower,

"Thy thrilling trump had roused the land,  
 "When fraud or danger were at hand;  
 "By thee, as by the beacon-light,  
 "Our pilots had kept course aright;  
 "As some proud column, though alone,  
 "Thy strength had propped the tottering throne.  
 "Now is the stately column broke,  
 "The beacon-light is quenched in smoke,  
 "The trumpet's silver sound is still,  
 "The warder silent on the hill!"—P. 8.

These verses so exactly resemble some tolerable lines which appeared two years ago in a very indifferent poem on the resignation of the late ministers, that Mr. Scott appears to have done little except substituting the name of Mr. Pitt for that of Mr. Fox, who is the subject of the original panegyric:

When the thick tempests of ungentle fate  
 O'erhung the dark horizon of the state,  
 Like some tall beacon raised upon a rock,  
 He stood unmoved amid the mighty shock,  
 Poured his broad light in guardian glory round,  
 And shone unclouded o'er the dark profound!  
 Led by that light, the pilot of the day,  
 In ease and safety might have steered his way,  
 Nor blindly brought us to the dreadful deep,  
 Where now we tremble as the whirlpools sweep!

As this introduction proceeds, the poet blesses the spirits of the mighty dead: and the vision of Westminster Abbey vanishing, leaves him to muse on rural scenery. He then concludes by speaking of Romance, and his own fondness for writing it. In describing the Genius of Chivalry, he gives the following lines:

"Around the Genius weave their spells,  
 "Pure Love, who scarce his passion tells;  
 "Mystery, half veiled and half revealed;  
 "And Honour, with his spotless shield;  
 "Attention, with fixed eye; and Fear,  
 "That loves the tale she shrinks to hear;  
 "And gentle Courtesy; and Faith,  
 "Unchanged by sufferings, time, or death;  
 "And Valour, lion-mettled lord,  
 "Leaning upon his own good sword."—P. 19.

Now in this allegorical assemblage there is a great confusion:



for some of the abstract qualities, here personified, appertain to Chivalry itself, namely, Love, Mystery, Honour, Courtesy, Faith, and Valour: whereas others belong simply to the reader or listener, namely, Attention and Fear.

The second introduction is addressed to the Reverend John Marriott, M. A. A thorn in Ettrick Forest is now gifted by the poet with speech, and relates how bravely the chase echoed among the shades in ancient times. Mr. Scott observes that he and Mr. Marriott have hunted very pleasantly too: then laments the absence of a lady departed from that neighbourhood, and of two children who used to ramble with him. A particular train of ideas, he observes, often awakens in his mind by the side of St. Mary's Lake: he proceeds to describe the place: and this introduction closes. In the concluding four pages of it are some of the weakest, and some of the most poetical lines in the whole volume. The bad lines are these:

“ If age had tamed the passions' strife,  
 “ And fate had cut my ties to life,  
 “ Here, have I thought 'twere sweet to dwell,  
 “ And rear again the chaplain's cell,  
 “ Like that same peaceful hermitage,  
 “ Where Milton longed to spend his age,  
 “ 'Twere sweet to mark the setting day,  
 “ On Bourhope's lonely top decay;  
 “ And, as it faint and feeble died,  
 “ On the broad lake and mountain side,  
 “ To say, ‘ Thus pleasures fade away,  
 “ Youth, talents, beauty, thus decay,  
 “ And leave us dark, forlorn, and grey; ” —P. 69.

This is surely in the worst taste imaginable. As the sun fades on the landscape, so the beams of happiness fade on men: the sunset leaves the landscape “ dark, forlorn, and grey,” and the failure of youth, of talents, and of beauty, leaves men metaphorically dark, metaphorically forlorn, but really and physically grey. But the lines that follow, though they contain some disagreeable distortions of phraseology, are very true to nature and to feeling: they are evidently written on the model of Milton's *Penseroso*:

“ Then gaze on Dryhope's ruined tower,  
 “ And think on Yarrow's faded flower;

" And when that mountain sound I heard,  
 " Which bids us be for storm prepared,  
 " The distant rustling of his wings,  
 " As up his force the tempest brings,  
 " 'Twere sweet, ere yet his terrors rave,  
 " To sit upon the wizard's grave;  
 " That wizard priest's, whose bones are thrust  
 " From company of holy dust;  
 " On which no sunbeam ever shines—  
 " (So Superstition's creed divines)—  
 " Thence view the lake, with sullen roar,  
 " Heave her broad billows to the shore;  
 " And mark the wild swans mount the gale,  
 " Spread wide through mist their snowy sail,  
 " And ever stoop again to lave  
 " Their bosoms on the surging wave:  
 " Then, when against the driving hail  
 " No longer might my plaid avail,  
 " Back to my lonely home retire,  
 " And light my lamp, and trim my fire;  
 " There ponder o'er some mystic lay,  
 " Till the wild tale had all its sway,  
 " And in the bittern's distant shriek  
 " I heard unearthly voices speak,  
 " And thought the wizard priest was come,  
 " To claim again his ancient home!  
 " And bade my busy fancy range,  
 " To frame him fitting shape and strange,  
 " Till from the task my brow I cleared,  
 " And smil'd to think that I had feared."—P. 69—71.

The verses prefixed to the third Canto are addressed to William Erskine, Esq. It is here that Mr. Scott makes the defence which has been already examined. The idea of some lines, in which Mr. Erskine is represented as advising the poet to sing the heroes of his country, is probably borrowed from Horace's "*Scriberis vario fortis.*" The most spirited passage is that which indicates Sir Sidney Smith and General Abercrombie:

" Or of the Red-cross hero teach,  
 " Dauntless in dungeon as on breach:  
 " Alike to him the sea, the shore,  
 " The brand, the bridle, or the oar;  
 " Alike to him the war that calls  
 " Its votaries to the shatter'd walls,

“ Which the grim Turk besmeared with blood,  
 “ Against the Invincible made good ;  
 “ Or that, whose thundering voice could wake  
 “ The silence of the Polar lake,  
 “ When stubborn Russ, and metal'd Swede,  
 “ On the warped wave their death-game played ;  
 “ Or that where vengeance and affright  
 “ Howled round the father of the fight,  
 “ Who snatched on Alexandria's sand  
 “ The conqueror's wreath with dying hand.”

P. 121, 122.

This introduction does not contain any thing else which deserves much notice, except a confused passage that very nearly approaches a bull, if it be not one in fact :

“ I deemed such nooks the sweetest shade  
 “ The sun in all his rounds surveyed.”—P. 126.

What sort of shade is that which is surveyed by the sun ?

The introduction addressed to James Skene, Esq. which precedes the fourth Canto, is a most desultory work. It contains some reflections on the mutability of human affairs, a lamentation for the death of Mr. Skene's lady, a recapitulation of the pleasant days that Mr. Scott and Mr. Skene spent together a dozen years ago, and a description of a shepherd who is likely to be lost in a snow-storm. This last subject, the reader will remember, has long ago been treated by Thomson in his Seasons.

The fifth introduction is addressed to George Ellis, Esq. It exhibits a succession of rambling allusions to old romances.

The last introductory lines, addressed to Richard Heber, Esq. are descriptive of Christmas, and a very uninteresting old ballad-like description they give. They then call Mr. Heber's attention from his classic studies to the goblin-lore of our poet.

The notes are objectionably voluminous. To occasional poems, indeed, explanations are often requisite, and to these works of a historical cast, a few references may fairly be per-



mitted ; but a hundred and thirty-six quarto pages of notes are rather more than the most indulgent reader can allow. Mr. Scott makes a couple of pages, in one place, by an extract from Dryden's Essay on Satire : in another place, a page by Perkin Warbeck's story, and by a speech in Ford's dramatic Chronicle of Perkin Warbeck : in another place a page about his own grandfather, inviting somebody to dinner : and in another four pages about an old woman, and a silly Northumbrian ballad that she used to repeat. He gives among these notes a ballad of his own too, called " The Spirit's blasted Tree : " which is not so good as the generality of his similar ballads. The rest of the notes are almost uniformly heavy and needless in the same degree.

And now, after so long an examination of the powers displayed by Mr. Scott in his *Marmion*, it is time to conclude these remarks. *Marmion*, with all its demerits, declares itself most clearly to have been written by a man of genius : but the genius of Mr. Scott does not appear to be, in strictness of speaking, a genius of the highest class. For his poetry seldom rises above the descriptive : and though, on some occasions, he has been very successful in describing character, yet his descriptions in general are nothing more than paintings of external objects. An author who presents a beautiful picture to the mental vision, is undoubtedly a poet ; but an author who does not perform something more, is hardly a poet of the highest order. Painting addresses herself to the corporeal sight, and, through the medium of this sense, acts upon all those faculties which can be influenced by things externally visible. Poetry addresses herself to what has been ingeniously termed, the mind's eye, and indeed to the other senses of the mind ; but Poetry is not restricted to the employment of these alone, in producing emotion. The physical and moral worlds, with all their avenues and outlets, are at her command : it is hers to visit alike the imagination, the passions, the judgment, and

the soul: to pass the boundaries of matter and space: to navigate the shoreless ocean of eternity: to stretch her pinion upward, even unto the threshold of heaven itself!

If Poetry bestow so many more and higher resources than painting, surely a poet who avails himself of only those that painting affords, is less to be admired, than he who fills the additional range of his own wider circle. The poetry which describes only the inanimate creation, can be ranked but with landscape-painting at best: the poetry which describes only the characters, manners, actions, and passions of individuals, may be said to perform the greatest work of which painting is capable, and can be said to perform no more; but the power which appeals to certain general feelings, inaccessible even to the noblest painters—which, by the means belonging to poetry alone, addresses our immortal rather than our earthly properties—which, while it is delighting the imagination or melting the heart, instructs the reason without the dryness of metaphysics, and swells the soul without the raving of enthusiasm—this is the splendid power, which, from the birth of Time, so few among mankind have possessed, and without which the ambitious sons of Verse will never become entitled to the glories of the highest genius!

It has been declared by some persons connected with Mr. Scott, that his next poem will be written on a totally different plan: and his real friends must surely rejoice, if this declaration shall be fulfilled. Let him only lay aside that worst of all affectations, the affectation of simplicity; that worst of all systems, the contempt of system: and there can be little doubt that his genius will procure him an immortal honour. But that fashion of style, which is founded on the caprice of an author, must always flit with the caprice of the public: and he alone who models his poetry upon those great works which have stood firm against the tides of time past, may hope to raise a pile that shall withstand the current of ages to come.

**NEW JOE MILLER, OR THE TICKLER;** containing upwards of Five Hundred Good Things, many of which are original, and the others selected from the best Authors. By James Bannantine, Esq. The Fourth Edition, with Additions. Vol. I.

**NEW JOE MILLER, OR THE TICKLER;** containing near Two Thousand good Things, many of which are original, and the others selected from the best Authors. Vol. II.

**OLD JOE MILLER, OR THE TICKLER;** being a complete and correct Copy from the best Editions of his celebrated Jest, and also including All the Good Things in above Fifty Jest-Books, published from the Year 1558 to the present Time. By James Bannantine, Esq. Editor of New Joe Miller, or the Tickler. Vol. III. or an Addenda to New Joe.

London: Printed for James Ridgway.

WITHOUT entering into the discussion of the merits of the ancients in general, it will not probably be desired, by the most strenuous of their advocates, that in some particular departments of literature they are palpably inferior to the moderns. It is a common mistake with their partisans to confound priority with pre-eminence, directly reversing the ordinary course of events, by giving to improvement a retrograde, instead of progressive, motion. I am not disposed to question their supremacy in certain branches of intellectual excellence; but I do contend, that in some they made no advances whatever, and in others never exceeded mediocrity. Wit in its more general and comprehensive sense they certainly exhibit, but in its familiar acceptation, it is very sparingly diffused through their productions, and had any Joe Miller at the court of Augustus attempted a compilation of jests and bon-mots, I guess he would have been puzzled to find them, and might have entered the house of death before he had passed the threshold of his undertaking.



It may be urged, that many such works probably existed, but that having no attractions for the monks and churchmen, who were the preservers of classic learning, in the dark ages, they unfortunately perished. History teaches us how to appreciate the sanctity and pureness of these divines;—that ordonnance which commands them to love their enemies, they rigidly observed; for the flesh and the devil were of the number. Recollecting this, and that the greater part of the books of Livy are irrecoverably lost, while the lascivious effusions of the amatory poets are preserved entire, we will not tax their prudery so unjustly as to attribute to it the suppression of an inoffensive Joe Miller. We can, however, only argue from what we know, not from what we conjecture, and our knowledge of ancient humourous productions will, I think, justify the assertion, that they do not exceed mediocrity. The comedies that have descended to us are, generally speaking, familiar dialogues, without any great breadth of humour, either in incident or character, and though we hear much of the comic writings of Fundanius Pellelissus, which have perished, we might have heard very little of them had they been preserved. In tragedy, the ancients retain their power much more, or at least give us ampler proofs of it, than they do in comedy. Euripides might still excite a modern audience to tears, whilst Aristophanes, whom his own audiences would not always pass, could never be endured by ours. Martial's Epigrams exhibit more of the smartness and point required in modern compositions of this sort: they consist of satirical observations, slight antitheses, little turns of phraseology, and moral sentences expressed generally with terseness, and sometimes with felicity; but in many parts how filthy and defiled! *Hierocles* the platonist, who was a writer or collector of moral and facetious sayings, approaches nearer to our modern ideas of drollery and humour than any of the ancients, and by playing on a pedant as we do on an Irishman, has recorded some blunders calculated to excite the risible muscles in an eminent degree. He

professes to have married for the mere patriotic purpose of raising children for the state ; but, unless we were acquainted with the lady of his choice, we cannot be sure of the public spirit of his motive. The pedants of the present day are real Christians ; they return good for evil, and see as much wit in him as he attributed stupidity to them. This is an exalted eulogium upon Hierocles ; but their comic discoveries are by no means confined to that author. The writer of this article perfectly recollects when, at school translating Lucian's Dialogues of the Dead, and beginning the speech of Amphiloehus to Mercury, " O Mercury, I have put my eye out," how he was astonished at the burst of laughter, which proceeded from the usher, ere he had time to complete the reading of the Greek. Many others are to be found, who see beauties even in defects ; to whom grossness is humour, and a scrap of obscenity a flash of wit. Pedants like these will, by a mental process peculiar to themselves, extract phosphorus from the basest materials, and gaze delighted on its fire, without suffering their nerves to be disturbed by its unsavoury and revolting odour. If, however, they can discover such a fund of criminality in the writings of the ancients, let them enjoy it. To relish a bad jest, is a want of taste, that will be readily pardoned by all those who cannot treat them with a good one.

When literature began to emerge from the barbarism, by which it had been so long obscured, it became customary to crown with laurel those who, on particular occasions, distinguished themselves at our colleges. Hence arose our Poets Laureat, whose establishment is very ancient. Selden, who made researches upon this subject, was unable to discover when the title commenced, but found that, in the year 1251, their salary was 100 shillings, and their productions composed in Latin ; a ceremony which, of late years, has been happily dispensed with. It is evident that, previously to the above-mentioned period, they became appendages of Royalty.

The origin of Court Fools is still more uncertain, but traces of them are discoverable in the records of all courts, from the remotest antiquity. Of these there were two sorts; one a natural idiot, who was kept for the humane and refined purpose of exciting mirth by his deplorable defects; and another who, as a buffoon or jester, was licensed to say whatever he pleased, and whose business it was to create amusement, and afford occasions of merriment and laughter by every means in his power. Some talent was requisite for the discharge of this office; for, like the clown of a modern pantomime, he was generally, under the mask of folly, the cleverest actor on the stage. In the British Museum there is an ancient work, consisting of moral and facetious sentences, purporting to be the joint production of the King's laureat and jester, whose names, had they been preserved, might have anticipated the immortality acquired by their more fortunate successor Joe Miller. This partnership in wit, was destined soon to be dissolved. The fool's duty being to rouse the laughter, and the laureat's to record the glories of the court, it was at length found that the latter could produce both these effects, and the former was consequently suppressed. Since that period, our laureats have, with some eminent exceptions, discharged their double duty to the general satisfaction.

A similar establishment formerly existed in the city; but in that quarter, both these posts have been long since abolished. Its laureatship expired with Elkanah Settle, upon whose demise, no person could be found qualified to commit to fame the heroic qualities of the lord-mayor, and the splendour of his annual show; nor can we wonder at this apparent dearth of genius, when we consider the vast imagination which such a subject requires. Owing to this untoward occurrence, our worthy chief magistrates seldom appear upon the records of fame; and, if we except William Walworth, who knocked down Wat Tyler for rebuking the King, and William Beckford, who is put up in Guild-hall for the very offence



Wat Tyler was guilty of, the others have descended to their ancestors, or rather to their graves,

“ Omnes illacrimabiles  
Urgentur ignotique, longâ  
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro.”

At a subsequent period, collections of good things first assumed the form of *Ana*, where bon-mots were economically sprinkled among a host of annotations, criticisms, epigrams, classical and modern selections, historical facts, and literary scraps of every denomination. These, however, were not calculated for general circulation. An uneducated reader would be appalled by Hebrew and Greek types, puzzled with uninteresting commentaries upon unintelligible texts; and, if after scratching among the rubbish, he at length turned up something, that had the glitter of a diamond, it was probably not worth the labour of the search.

To avoid these objections, and give unqualified delight to this happy nation, collections were at length published, consisting exclusively of jests, bon-mots, witticisms, and humorous anecdotes, of which description several appeared before the time of Joe Miller. To the best of these early publications, the name of Killigrew has been prefixed, although it did not, I believe, appear until some years after his death. Thomas Killigrew was born in 1611, died in 1682, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. Mrs. Anne Killigrew, to whose memory Dryden has inscribed a most beautiful ode, entitling that lady the youngest virgin daughter of the skies, was the niece of this celebrated wag. He was for some time employed upon an embassy at Venice, but, from his improper conduct, was obliged to relinquish the appointment, upon which occasion Sir John Denham wrote an indifferent epigram. After his return, he was made groom of the bed-chamber to King Charles the Second, and soon became intimate with his master. In wit he was surpassed by none at

that laughter-loving court, and his great familiarity with the King, gave his tongue a latitude and freedom, to which others presumed not to aspire. Several of his bon-mots, which are to be found in *the Books*, sufficiently establish this fact; for they could never have been tolerated from any other than Killigrew, even by such a complaisant monarch as Charles the Second.

Of Joe Miller's history I have been able to learn nothing further, than that he was an actor, as I am informed, of very dull capacity; and that his dullness made it a good jest to call a book of jests by his name: from the same authority it should seem, that he belonged to the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and acted Irish parts, which is confirmed by a print still existing of him, in the character of Teague, in the *Committee*. He died in 1738, at the age of 54, and was buried in Saint Clement's church-yard, with the following epitaph, written by Stephen Duck:—

“ Here lie the remains of  
 “ Honest Joe Miller,  
 “ Who was  
 “ A tender husband,  
 “ A sincere friend,  
 “ A facetious companion,  
 “ And an excellent comedian.  
 “ If humour, wit, and honesty, could save  
 “ The humorous, witty, honest, from the grave,  
 “ The grave had not so soon this tenant found,  
 “ With honesty, and wit, and humour, crown'd;  
 “ Or could esteem and love preserve our breath,  
 “ Or guard us longer from the stroke of death,  
 “ The stroke of death on him had later fell,  
 “ Whom all mankind esteem'd and lov'd so well.”

In taking leave of this celebrated jester, so far as he is personally concerned, I wish I could bid an eternal adieu to some of his jokes, certain old offenders, who are apt to be

introduced into society, though every one must be weary of their appearance. My task now conducts me to the labours of the present editor, James Bannantine, Esq. In the advertisement to the first volume, James Bannantine, Esq. begins with observing, that the previous jest-books have been compiled generally in the most slovenly manner, the articles injudiciously selected, and almost invariably copied from book to book, whence he infers the necessity of a well conducted and novel publication. I am very sorry that this necessity still exists; for he has cautiously abstained from remedying any of the evils of which he complains. To be sure he informs us, that "*to his knowledge*," he has not inserted an article, which has appeared in any English book of the same description. The words in italics certainly contain a boundless salvo, but to my knowledge, at least 7-8ths of them made their debut long ago, and at every page we recognise a familiar acquaintance. Nothing can be more flat and sickening, than a new hash of old jokes. By the unfortunate lot of humanity, all pleasurable sensations are more evanescent than those of a painful nature. A good witticism may, by too frequent use, lose its power of pleasing; but a joke, that is disgusting at first, will become intolerable upon repetition. An economist of mental pleasure will, therefore, beware of encountering the new Joe Miller, which, like the new moon, is only a different presentation of the old one.

As every book of Marmion has a separate introductory canto, so has every book of the new Joe Miller a distinct preface. In that which enhances the second volume, the editor says, "It has been frequently observed, that the Scotch are deficient in wit; nay, it has even been asserted, that, "*it is as impossible for a Scot, as for a German, to be witty*." Now I dissent altogether from this illiberal dogmatism. Is it not notorious, that many of them live by their wits? If they have not original right in all the *good things*, that are going about, they have at least a lasting possession



of very many of them: By the happy talent of uttering certain monosyllabic bon-mots, for the amusement of a minister, and sticking to government at home, they oftentimes become fixed as governors abroad, &c. All this may be no joke to us, but it must be vastly entertaining to them, and though we may be serious upon the subject, we must let them laugh that win. Envy is the shadow cast by fortune, and attends her in every motion; hence our illiberal sarcasms against the Scotch for their charitable predilection for their own countrymen, and our attributing to discreditable causes their uniform success in life.

Were proof wanting to refute the injurious assertion, that wit is as rarely the growth of Scotland as timber, it would be effectually furnished by James Bannantine, Esq. who assures us that, although born north of the Tweed, he has himself contributed to the work several pieces of wit. This avowal is certainly not one of them: there are, however, various articles which we willingly attribute to him, for we are sure they can never have found their way into any other book of jests.

A facetious modern writer has called the present æra, the age of taxes and puffs; and, indeed, the perusal of the latter forms by no means the slightest burden of the former. Our Magazines and Reviews, and the editors of our diurnal publications, made a most degrading sacrifice to avarice, when first they suffered whole battalions of puffs to escape from their proper quarters, and small-type cantonments to invade the high-way, and open masked batteries upon the unwary passenger. Infinite are the deceptions under which they steal upon us, and innumerable the disguises and crapes under whose cover they arrest our progress; and if they do not rob us of our money, at least defraud us of our time. Of all practisers in this art, the lottery-contractors are the most persevering and audacious; fighting under all colours, and blazoning every wall from St. Luke's, where their dupes are found, to the King's Bench, whither they are frequently

conducted. By a tempting exhibition of capital prizes, the credulous multitude are "struck with sudden adoration," and purchase tickets, only to complete the line of Milton by a speedy display of "blank awe." In perusing the public journals, it is impossible to escape their traps.—"The convention of Cintra, by which the enemy was suffered to carry away all the plunder, and which so cruelly disappointed the hopes of the nation," forms on a paper now before me, the preface to "an advantageous Lottery Scheme," and is much more appropriate than the writer probably intended. The nation ought long ago to have discovered, that their rich wheel is like a St. Catharine wheel, which seems to scatter a shower of gold on every side; but when we attempt to snatch the prize, we only burn our fingers,—the treasure vanishes, the momentary splendour is succeeded by darkness, and the deceitful vision ends in smoke.

Vulgar modes of puffing becoming at length too notorious to escape occasional detection, the proprietor of Vauxhall Gardens bethought himself of classical assistance; the Greek and Roman authors were used as janitors to this fashionable promenade, and ancient literature was ransacked to supply new heads to the old body of puffs. "Cato and Lucretia" served to introduce the congenial characters of — Dignum and Mrs. Bland:—"Prometheus, who formed men of clay, and endued them with *stolen* fire," composed the prelude to — "a beautiful new song, by Mr. Kelly:"—"Hannibal's vinegar, which penetrated and destroyed the bowels of the hardest rock," led by an easy transition to — "Genuine port wines," and the "ancient Greek courtesans," naturally suggested — "the Duke of York's Band."

Nor have the illegitimate sons of Esculapius, been deficient in this fashionable accomplishment. "A horrid murder!" is often made to precede "Leake's patent pills," which is simply a metathesis, or transposition of the course of events; while a "dreadful insurrection of the Blacks" serves to confirm the efficacy of "Gowland's Lotion," by which it might

have been completely avoided, since "it prevents all eruptions, and gives to the skin a beautiful whiteness." "The flourishing state of the public funds," in the beginning of a paragraph, is wound up at the end with "Winsor's gas lights, or inflammable air;" and the "long confinement of Alexander Davison, Esq. in the King's Bench," is introductory to "an effectual remedy for the yellow fever."

"As fools rush in, where angels fear to stand;" so do some of these licensed murderers seek the sanctuary of the temple, and extract from the Sacred Writings labels for their phials of wrath. Solomon's Song seems an odd way of bringing us acquainted with "Solomon's Guide to Old Age," since its precepts do not seem so well calculated for the extension as the enjoyment of life; yet I have seen this farrago of quackery thus ushered into notice. Of all the wise men, in the deleterious way, this puffing Solomon may be reckoned the wisest, for he is indisputably the richest. Christians and Jews have alike worshipped this golden calf, while he himself, if report may be credited, by professing their religions alternately, as interest dictated, has plucked them both, with a most meritorious impartiality. Far be it from me to insinuate that he was ever a sincere convert to either Christianity or Judaism; I rather suspect he was like the blank leaf between the Old and New Testaments, not belonging to either, but making a cover of both.

This puffing propensity being so prevalent among certain pretenders, it was natural to anticipate its appearance in the pages of the New Joe Miller. Several instances could easily be selected. Take the following:—

"The Bishop of ——— has been much in the habit of visiting the laboratory of Mr. Swainson, where that gentleman prepares his *Velno's Vegetable Syrup*. On one of these visits, Mr. Swainson said jocularly, 'I wish, my Lord, that it were to become the custom to take the Sacrament in my syrup.' The Bishop very seriously answered—'I wish to God it were; it would cure both body and soul at once.'" Vol. I. p. 149.



This is rather irreverent, and not particularly witty; but as it was probably paid for, the Editor was quite right in admitting it. At pp. 3, 50, and 120, of 2d vol. we are presented with further doses of the same medicine; and at p. 207 of the first volume, we have the following significant rider, in the shape of a note:—

“ If families could be prevailed on to adopt Mr. Child’s method  
“ of brewing ale and porter, they would not only have their beer  
“ at about half the price commonly paid for it, but the best that  
“ can be brewed. This treatise costs only one shilling.”

This note richly merited a place in the body of the work, for, though many readers may doubt the claims of a pun, or a *bon-mot*, ale and porter are *good things* in the estimation of all mankind.

We are all subject to misfortune! It is mine to be now compelled to take leave of James Bannantine, Esq. in his individual capacity, and to direct my attention to the compilation, which he has edited. In sober sadness it must be confessed, that, generally speaking, it is a deadly lively production. Its principal defect is a redundancy of matter. Of such a vast congregation, a great portion must necessarily be bad, and a considerable number trite. Many are gross and indecent; a fault which no wit can excuse, but which its total absence here renders quite intolerable. An abridgment, or *selecta è profanis*, if executed with taste and discernment, would be infinitely preferable to this Compendium of Classic Wit (as it is called), of which, half the good things are too bad for insertion. For such a selection, the present work is not deficient in materials; the style, however, might be materially improved. By a slavish transcription from one book to another, the incidents are related in their original dull and commonplace phraseology, though they might receive a considerable infusion of humour by occasionally adopting the quaint drollery of the *Miseries of Human Life*. Of this hint, James Bannantine, Esq. may, perhaps, avail himself in a future edition.

If it be true, as the editor informs us, *adopting the phraseology of the Lexicographer*, that his work "has exhilarated the saturnine columns of diurnal compilation, and imparted coruscation to the dormant embers of dramatic composition," it must be a work of important influence. This alone, and its acknowledged notoriety, can apologize for the length of these observations: the same causes will justify my inserting the following digest of rules, calculated to give efficacy to Mr. Bannantine's labours. By a careful perusal of these, the reader may enjoy the happiness of being as much hated and feared as the most inveterate wag upon record.

Feel your ground before you take a single step, and adapt yourself to your company. You may find yourself among a set of wretches who never read Joe Miller, and yet have comprehension enough to understand him. This is fine!—Make the most of such a situation, for it is a happiness not often to recur. If any aspiring member venture to oppose you, crush him without mercy. If you do *not* know what he is going to say, tell him you can help him out in that story, should he be at a loss; if you *do*, cut him short, by snatching the sting of the tale from him, and turn it against himself. You will get the laugh, and the audience will be happy to reduce him to their own level, by measuring him with you.

Never mind what smart you occasion, provided you can say a smart thing. Your enemy you have a right to wound; and with whom can you take a liberty, if not with a friend? A pretty thing, truly, if a jest were to be stifled because it might give pain! It would give much more to suppress it; and if others do not like the taste, how can they expect you to swallow it?

Latin *bon-mots* are safe, if you are sure of the pronunciation, for they who understand them will laugh naturally, and they who do not, for fear of being thought ignorant. With women this rule will not apply; do not, therefore, in their society, quote Horace, or confess yourself a freemason; for they mutually hate and suspect whatever they are excluded from.

It is a very successful and laudable practice to poach upon Joe's premises with some poor dog who is fain at night to start the game, which you have marked down in the morning. At the given signal, let fly, and you are sure to kill the prey, and perhaps some of the company with laughter. Be sure that your pointer is staunch.

When you launch a good thing, which is only heard by the person next you, wait patiently for a pause, and throw in again. Your neighbour, possibly, will not renew his laugh, but will excuse you, well knowing that you cannot afford to throw away a good thing.

If your party be stupid, and you want an excuse for getting away, give vent to some double-entendres to distress the women. This will answer your purpose, for the men must be fools, indeed, if they do not kick you down stairs.

In the want of other subjects for your raillery and sneers, personal defects form a tempting source of pleasantry. When your wit has not a leg of its own to stand on, it may run some time upon your neighbour's wooden one. At least a dozen jokes may be endorsed upon a hump back; and you may make a famous handle of a long nose, by enquiring of its proprietor whether he can reach to blow it, whether he can hear himself sneeze, &c. &c. Take care, however, while making fun with his nose, that he does not make free with yours.

If your party be equal to yourself, in their knowledge of *the Books*, or talent for extempore repartee, laugh loud at your own sayings, and pretend not to hear theirs. Laughter is catching, though wit is not.

If they be decidedly superior in both these requisites, have a bad head-ach and be silent. You could not speak to advantage, and it's better to be pitied for having a pain in the head, than for having nothing in it.

Mimicry and buffoonery are good substitutes for wit. Thus you may make some use of a prosing old Poet, by listening to him with feigned attention, and at the same time thrusting your tongue in the opposite cheek. This will amuse the com-



pany, and cannot offend the old gentleman, for he will be wise enough to wish your tongue kept where it is.

Beware of quizzing your host too severely, or he will not ask you again. Be merry and wise. A laugh is a tempting thing, I own; so is turtle soup. Always remember that a good dinner is in itself a good thing, and the only one that will bear frequent repetition.

If you have once got a man down, belabour him without mercy. Remember the saying of the Welch boxer—"Ah, Sir, if you knew the trouble I have had in getting him down, you would not ask me to let him get up again."

Invariably preserve your best joke for the last; and when you have uttered it, follow the example now set you, by—taking your leave.

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HISTOIRE DES EVENEMENS MEMORABLES DU REGNE DE GUSTAVE III. ROI DE SUEDE, &c. PAR MR. C. I. E. H. D'AGUILA.—2 vols. 8vo. *Paris. 1807. Imported by H. Colburn, Conduit Street. i. e. HISTORY OF THE MEMORABLE EVENTS OF THE REIGN OF GUSTAVUS THE THIRD, KING OF SWEDEN.*

If the lives and characters of Kings must, from their high importance, naturally claim the attention of their contemporaries, the life of the father of the present King of Sweden is surely calculated to engage that attention in an eminent degree, not only from the noble stand which he made for the independence of his country, but also from the difficulties with which his illustrious son is at this moment surrounded, in the same glorious cause.

At a time, when, tired of a factious and overbearing aristo-

crazy, the Swedes would have gladly followed the example of their Danish neighbours, and cheerfully bent their necks under a despotic sway, Gustavus III. confirmed their liberties. For twenty-one years, he displayed, upon the Swedish throne, talents the most splendid, and virtues the most endearing. Success attended him by sea and by land; and yet this monarch, crowned with victory, and the benefactor of his people, fell by the hand of an assassin, and that assassin was a Swede.

Surely such a reign must furnish a narrative as interesting as any reign of equal duration in the annals of modern Europe. But Mr. D'Aguila has rather disappointed our expectation. He strings together Gazette accounts, old historical statements, well known geographical information, and a few political reflections, not particularly striking for either novelty or depth. His style is sometimes heavy; not a single authority is quoted in support of the facts which he relates. It is true, he tells us, in his *preliminary discourse*, that "his timidity" has been overcome by the consideration that he derives the "knowledge of the events which he narrates, from the most authentic sources." But ought he not to have stated those authorities?

The first part of the first volume contains a short abstract of the origin of the Swedish Monarchy; the geographical situation of the kingdom, and the topographical one of its capital; a description of Lapland, and a concise history of Sweden, until Gustavus the Third.

Mr. D'Aguila inclines to think that Charles XII. fell by treachery, before Frederickshall.

"On the 30th of November, he went, at night, into the trenches. Being much fatigued, he leaned upon the parapet, and fell asleep. *Mairet*, the engineer, was at some distance. Having observed a convulsive motion in the King, he drew nearer, and found him killed by a musket-ball. At the same instant, he perceived the Adjutant-General *Siquier*. Charles had still his hand upon the hilt of his sword, somewhat drawn. When the wound was examined, it was asserted that the shot had not come from the fortress; and when the report was spread that the King had been killed by a musket-ball, a general officer

“present at the siege wrote---*it is not true.* Besides, it is very remarkable, that another general officer, commanding at the siege, had foretold that the death of Charles XII. would take place on the last day of November.”

Why are not the names of these two Generals mentioned?

The second part of the first volume relates the accession of Gustavus III. to the Swedish throne. Gustavus was born on the 25th of January, 1746, and succeeded his father, Adolphus Frederick, on the 12th of February, 1771, at the age of five-and-twenty. He was in France at that time. An assembly of the States was immediately convened for the 13th of June.

Gustavus, on his journey homewards, passed a few days at Berlin, with his uncle, Frederick the Great, King of Prussia. From Berlin, he proceeded to Stralsund; and landed at Carlsrona, in Sweden, on the 18th of May, 1771. The acclamations of the people every where hailed his approach; but the kingdom was torn by the intrigues of the nobles, divided in two equally dangerous factions, which rendered the executive power of the Monarch barely nominal.

The Diet was opened on the 13th of June, 1771. Gustavus himself composed the funeral oration, which was read at the solemn obsequies of his father. The session was extremely tumultuous. Nothing was done, because the four orders could not agree on any resolution. An attempt, which Gustavus made on the 28th of November, to conciliate the different parties, proved abortive. It rather tended to inflame the passions of his opponents. However, on the 29th of May, 1772, his coronation was marked by the establishment of a new order of knighthood, called the Order of Wasa. The States took the oath of allegiance on the first of June.

But the discontents of the nobles increased to an alarming degree, and caused at last that memorable revolution, which Gustavus effected in the government of his country on the 19th of August, 1772. He recovered the whole of the executive power, including the supreme command of the navy



and army, the nomination to all civil and military offices, the right of convening and dissolving the States, without being obliged to assemble them at fixed periods, and the entire disposal of the public money. The privilege of enacting and repealing laws, and the imposition of taxes, were left to the Diet, composed of the deputies of the nobility, clergy, citizens, and peasants.

The courage and prudence with which Gustavus achieved this revolution, are yet fresh in our memory. But we cannot omit noticing the tender anxiety which this great Prince manifested, at this critical period, for the glory of his nation.

“ On the morning of the 19th of August, Gustavus the Third  
“ left his apartments, attended by officers of the horse-guards,  
“ gentlemen of the chamber, &c. He stopt a moment in the hall  
“ of the guards. A little emotion was visible in his countenance ;  
“ but he said, with firmness, to those who were about him : ‘ If  
“ I have the misfortune to fall, let it not be told to my brothers  
“ that it was by the hand of a Swede.’ ”

Again—

“ To the multitudes that crowded about him, on his road, ready  
“ to take the new oath of allegiance, he answered with affability :  
“ ‘ The bare word of a Swede is as good as an oath.’ ”

And,

“ A libel against the king had been posted in a conspicuous part  
“ of the standing pillory. Gustavus wanted to know what it con-  
“ tained. Having perused it, he said---‘ It has not been written  
“ by a Swede.’ ”

The second volume opens with the war against Russia, in 1788, 1789, and 1790. We felt inclined to complain of the author for transporting us, all at once, from the year 1772 to the year 1788, without recording one single circumstance of the life of his hero for the space of sixteen years ; when glancing once more at the title of his book, we found that he had prudently styled it a *History of the Memorable Events of the Reign of Gustavus the Third*. Diminutive observations, says Johnson, seem to take something from the dignity of writing. Yet knowing, as we do, that, in 1777, Gustavus visited

Catharine the Second at St. Petersburg; that in April, 1783, the Swedish Monarch concluded a Treaty of Commerce with the United States of America; that in 1784, he paid a visit to the King of France, and purchased of him the little island of St. Bartholomew, in the West Indies, which was formally ceded to Sweden, by the treaty of Versailles of the 26th of July 1784; that in 1786, Gustavus had restored the Swedish navy to its ancient importance, by the addition of fourteen new ships of the line, and thirteen frigates; and that, shortly before the war broke out, he wrote, in French, an excellent work on *The Danger of the Political Balance of Europe*, which was translated into English by Lord Mountmorres; we think all these occurrences, and many others, fully entitled to the appellation of *memorable events*, and as such, well worthy of a place in a History of Gustavus the Third, written even on Mr. D'Aguila's plan.

The account of the war in Finland, is prefaced by lamentations on the infractions made on the peace of Westphalia, which induce the author to attempt a slight sketch of the Russian Empire, and of the Prussian Monarchy. He considers both these powers as the chief causes of those infractions. With respect to Prussia, he falls into an error which we should not have noticed, had he not mentioned the circumstance once before, in a note, at the bottom of the 97th page of the first volume. He again asserts, in page 35 of the second volume—

“ Frederick William, surnamed the Great Elector, shook off  
“ the yoke; in the midst of the wars which ravaged the Em-  
“ pire, he felt his independence; and, in the year 1701, crowned  
“ himself King of Prussia, in the town of Koenigsberg.”

It was not Frederick William, the Great Elector, who assumed the royal dignity, but his son Frederick, known by the name of Frederick I. King of Prussia.

We coincide with Mr. D'Aguila in the following remarks, as applicable to Prussia in 1787:

“ Proud of her warlike reputation, and shielded by the glory  
 “ which she had acquired under the late King Frederick II. who  
 “ was the soul of his council, or rather his own council, Prussia,  
 “ for the first time since her accession to royal dignity, found her-  
 “ self abandoned to the management of ministers, that is to say,  
 “ under the influence of various political ideas. When a sovereign  
 “ is desirous of increasing his power, ministers generally suggest  
 “ projects of territorial aggrandizement.”

And in the note to these remarks,

“ And yet it may be proved arithmetically, that in proportion as  
 “ small states or sovereignties disappear, nations grow poor, and  
 “ all resources are diminished.”

But the extension of states, operates also as a check to public liberty; and this is undoubtedly its most injurious tendency.

Mr. D'Aguila then passes to a geographical description of the Grand Duchy of Finland. This important province, which is at present occupied by Russian troops, has an extent of 19,883 English square miles, or 3000 Swedish square miles; and not, as the author says, “ 3000 lieues carrées, ou 3000 milles d'Allemagne, ou environ trente mille verstes de Russie.” It is half as large as modern Germany, and considerably beyond a third of all Sweden, the surface of which does not exceed 6900 Swedish square miles.

In point of population, Finland contains nearly one-third of all the inhabitants of Sweden. Mr. D'Aguila states its population at 750,000 individuals; but their number, in 1806, was 898,463; which still gives only thirty inhabitants to the English square mile. And yet the population of Finland has been more than doubled in sixty-five years; since in the year 1741, the total number of inhabitants amounted to no more than 408,839 individuals.

Notwithstanding Finland is situated so far to the north, its soil is so fertile, and its agriculture has been improved to such a degree, that it grows corn sufficient for its consumption. And in this respect again, it is one of the most valuable parts of Sweden, where the southern provinces alone are not exposed to the necessity of an annual importation of corn.



In the enumeration of the principal places of Finland, Mr. D'Aguila has omitted *Uleaborg*, which, next to *Abo* the capital, is the most commercial town, and has a population of nearly 4000 individuals.

Before he enters upon the narrative of the war, the author justly reprobates that odious system of separating the people from the prince, which the Empress Catharine II. introduced in her manifestoes, and which has afterwards been so successfully imitated by the governors of France during her revolutionary frenzy.

Whilst Gustavus the Third was personally engaged with the Russians in Finland, the Danes penetrated into Sweden from Norway: but the attacks of this new enemy were soon rendered nearly inoffensive by the firm interference of Mr. Elliot, the English minister at Copenhagen. Gustavus in the mean time hastened from the other extremity of the kingdom to strengthen this frontier. His irresistible eloquence obtained him the aid of the loyal inhabitants of Dalecarlia. He also assembled the States on the 26th of January, 1789. But the debates of the nobility manifested such a determined and unjust opposition to the measures necessary for a successful prosecution of the war, that Gustavus found himself reluctantly obliged publicly to rebuke their factious conduct in an energetic speech, which he pronounced in the Assembly of the States, on the 17th of February. A new act of *Union and Security*, as it is called, was promulgated. It confirmed the constitution of the 21st of August, 1772. The Assembly was dissolved on the 27th of April, 1789.

The war against the Russians continued with various success by sea and by land, until the 10th of July, 1790, when the defeat of the Russian fleet, at Swenksund, by the Swedish fleet, under the immediate orders of the King, induced the Court of St. Petersburg to propose a treaty of peace, which was concluded on the 14th of August, 1790. Gustavus returned to Stockholm on the 19th of the same month. It is as a naval

conqueror at Swenksund, that he is represented in that fine pedestrian statue, which the citizens of the capital have erected to his memory, on the quay near the royal palace at Stockholm.

The second part of the second Volume narrates the fatal consequences of the clemency which Gustavus shewed to several officers, who, under pretence that the war was an offensive one, and ought not to have been undertaken on the part of Sweden without the consent of the States, had refused to march against the Russians in Finland. To this shameful transaction the conduct of the loyal inhabitants of Finland had afforded a most striking contrast: animated with a sacred love of their country, a zealous attachment to their prince, and a just abhorrence of the despotic tendency of the Russian government, they displayed twenty years ago the same ardour in the Swedish cause, which they have again lately, though less successfully manifested.

Alarmed at the unexpected turn, which the revolution of France took in 1791, Gustavus, to be nearer the scene, set out for Germany. He met the eldest brother of the unfortunate Louis XVI. at Aix la Chapelle. On his return to Sweden, he summoned a diet at Gefle. All his propositions were readily acquiesced in by the States. He returned to Stockholm towards the end of February 1792. But on the night of the 16th of March of the same year, he was shot with a pistol, at a masquerade in the opera-house, by an assassin named Ankarström, who was one of a triumvirate of discontented nobles, bent upon Gustavus's destruction, and on whom this horrible task had devolved by lot. The king lingered in great pain till the 29th of March, when he expired in the 46th year of his age and the 21st of his reign.

Mr. D'Aguila has drawn the character of Gustavus at great length. We quote the conclusion of it in the words of the original as a fair specimen of the style of the work.



“ Il ne lui manqua pour se montrer le plus admirable Prince du  
 “ monde que d’être le chef d’un pays où il auroit trouvé toutes  
 “ les ressources nécessaires au développement de ses grandes qua-  
 “ lités personnelles. La Suède ne pouvoit les lui offrir. Cepen-  
 “ dant par le loyal emploi de toutes ses facultés morales il sut  
 “ être digne de laisser aux générations un perpétuel et respec-  
 “ table souvenir. Elles diront qu’il étoit né pour la vraie  
 “ gloire, puis qu’elles trouveront dans ses travaux qu’il avoit une  
 “ intelligence sans bornes, une capacité prééminente, une raison  
 “ supérieure, des pensées vives et exactes sur ce qu’il convenoit  
 “ d’entreprendre, des lumières claires et distinctes sur ce qu’il  
 “ falloit exécuter, une activité sans cesse prête et toujours infai-  
 “ gible et qui se multiplioit à proportion des besoins et du salut  
 “ de l’état ; et qu’avec tant d’avantages pour la plus brillante  
 “ renommée il y joignit encore les vertus d’un Prince toujours juste,  
 “ aimable, bienfaisant, et clément ; vertus qui déterminent essen-  
 “ tiellement le sublime caractère du véritable Père de la Patrie.”

That Sweden could not afford him the resources necessary for the display of his great personal qualities, is incontestable : but for that very reason we think Gustavus would have been better entitled to the honourable appellation of Father of his Country, if keeping aloof of the political broils of Europe, he had not harboured the romantic though chivalric project of warring against the French Revolution, at the head of the motley troops of Sweden, Russia, Austria, Prussia, and the petty States of Germany. Success in such an enterprise would no doubt have commanded the admiration of the world : but kings are not above the rule laid down by the poet. They also should consider

*Quid valeant humeri.*

From the unfavourableness of its climate for the growth of grain, it is only by the exchange of its wood and iron, and by the produce of its fisheries, that the kingdom of Sweden can obtain the supply of the corn it wants. If its commerce be long impeded by war, the country is exposed to the utmost distress. Half a century had not healed the wounds which the warlike Charles brought upon Sweden.

Gustavus has been blamed for having introduced a taste for theatrical representations. Mr. D’Aguila exculpates him by



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saying, that it was with the view “to occupy the leisure of  
 “persons of fortune, and to snatch the Swedish nobles from  
 “that inactivity, by which they suffered themselves to be  
 “subjugated.” But it was also done for the more laudable  
 purpose of inspiring the higher classes with a greater relish  
 for their native language, the beauties of which had hardly  
 been sufficiently felt and valued, before the reign of Gustavus;  
 and in order to substitute more polished amusements in place  
 of that fatal rage for gambling, which was so general in  
 Sweden.

In the interior of his family, Gustavus was not happy. His  
 two brothers “had a similar inclination for not very refined  
 “but extremely expensive pleasures. This singular taste  
 “led them both to expences far above their income. An equal  
 “penury of cash forced them frequently to apply to the King  
 “for fresh supplies. The embarrassments of the Duke of  
 “Sudermania were so considerable after the war, that Gustavus  
 “with all his good will could not immediately relieve him. The  
 “Duke resented it with more than coolness; but the king seemed  
 “not to perceive his change of behaviour.” The frequent oc-  
 currence of a circumstance which has embarrassed more than  
 one government in Europe, affords, perhaps, a distant glimpse  
 of the policy of that barbarous custom, which excludes the  
 children of Eastern despots from society, and confines them  
 to the walls of a seraglio.

How Mr. D’Aguila could ever be led to adopt an anecdote  
 totally unsupported by any authority, and false upon the face  
 of it, is impossible to conjecture. In a note to page 182 of the  
 first Volume, he says: “Frederick II. being yet a child, re-  
 “vealed one of the greatest secrets of the Prussian cabinet.  
 “When the ambassador of France announced him the death  
 “of Louis XIV. in 1715, Frederick answered—‘I am very  
 “glad your king is dead.’” Frederick II. was born on the  
 24th of January 1712. He was of course only three years old.

We cannot dismiss the French historian of Gustavus the



Third, without adverting to that singular infelicity common to almost all French writers, of disfiguring the names and words of foreign languages. Mr. D'Aguila spells *Stemböck* instead of *Steinböck*; *Maelstrand* for *Marstrand*; *fullmagh* instead of *tollmacht*; *freulen* instead of *fröken*, &c. In this last instance he is guilty of a triple blunder, in writing *freulen*, which he meant for the German word *fräulein*; in supposing that the Swedes had not a term for it in their own language, which is *fröken*; and in translating it into French by *frêle*, which is an adjective signifying *frail, weak*. How far Swedish young ladies (noblemen's daughters, *demoiselles de condition*) will be pleased with being styled *frail*, we do not know: but we are pretty certain that the French National Institute will never enrich the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie* with the word *frêle* as a substantive denoting a nobleman's daughter.

Mr. D'Aguila is however entitled to the praise of unequivocally expressing a just abhorrence of crooked politics, and of having had the courage to print at Paris, in 1807, a work which he wrote in a foreign land in 1798, without omitting the following passage, which contains the most direct censure of the politics of France: we quote it in his own words:

“ Mais avant de parler des moteurs qui provoquèrent les hostilités et les perfidies qui s'y trouvèrent mêlées; avant de diriger les regards sur de grandes époques appartenant (it should be *appartenantes*) à ce Siècle, et qui forment l'origine directe des événemens qu'on doit exposer dans l'historique de cette guerre en Finlande; il est utile de rappeler la base qui seule peut rendre les événemens profitables en les faisant tourner vers une instruction morale, la seule salutaire pour l'humanité. Une telle instruction prouve sans cesse que la politique, pour être heureuse, ne doit exclure ni la conscience, ni les vertus, et qu'il n'est jamais permis d'attacher la nécessité d'aucune sorte de perfidie à la réussite d'aucune entreprise.”

But he has taken care to provide his book with an excellent passport, by affixing this motto to the first volume: “ *Non aliud discordantis Patriæ remedium fuisse quàm ut ab Uno regeretur.*” Tacit. Ann.

MEMOIRS OF THE REV. JOHN NEWTON, LATE RECTOR OF THE UNITED PARISHES OF ST. MARY WOOLNOTH, AND ST. MARY WOOLCHURCH-HAW, LOMBARD STREET, WITH GENERAL REMARKS ON HIS LIFE, CONNEXIONS, AND CHARACTER. BY RICHARD CECIL, A.M. MINISTER OF ST. JOHN'S, BEDFORD-ROW. *Second Edition. London. Hatchard, 1808. 1 vol. 12mo. Price 4s.*

THE reader, who should take up the present "Last dying words, speech, and confession, of Mr. Newton," with no other purpose than amusement, would be in danger of mistaking the book itself for a burlesque, and its editor for some profane witling, who had contrived, by constant lounging at the Temple of Blackfriars, and close attention to the writings of John Wesley, Rowland Hill, and Robert Hawker, to exhibit a very ingenious and accurate delineation of the general features, and individual peculiarities of religious fanaticism. Mr. Newton he would suppose to be a mere imaginary being, exalted by the fancy of the novelist to a convenient pre-eminence in all the vanity, ignorance, and profaneness, which are requisite to the composition of a perfect Methodist. The strange examples of pious nonsense, which are inserted under the name of extracts, he would admire, as an ingenious condensation of all that is ridiculous in the memoranda of Wesley, or the visions of Swedenborg; nor would his pleasure be diminished by comparing them either with those serious productions, or with the most celebrated satires on the same subject. The sketches of Anstey and Stevens, like shaded profiles of the human countenance, convey but an imperfect idea of the peculiar features of Methodism.

On a more careful perusal, however, the temporary amusement, which might be excited by such a mistake, would subside, not only into a conviction of the genuineness of the book, and the identity of its editor, but of the magnitude of the

dangers to be apprehended from the zealous perseverance of Methodism in every plan which can tend in the slightest degree to weaken the stability of the national religion, and to add to its own political and religious influence.

To him who feels the least reverence for the religious institutions of his country, or conviction of the necessity of those barriers which have been raised by the genius and piety of our ancestors against the violence of lawless enthusiasm, or the artifices of designing hypocrisy, the elevation of such men as Mr. Newton to the honours and emoluments of our Established Church, must be a source of rational anxiety. If men professing the principles and pursuing the conduct which are here delineated, be once suffered to enjoy those revenues which were originally granted to the support of "rational piety," and "sound learning," and to preach in the panoply of power against that very authority which it is the acknowledged duty of every regular clergyman to defend, it is vain to support the exterior appearance of an Establishment which can have only a nominal existence. It is better that we should at once resign the forms and ceremonies of an Established Church, and degrade ourselves to a level with the followers of Wesley, than that *they* should be enabled, by the negligence of our Dignitaries, and the dereliction of our Senators, to threaten its present supporters with exclusion, and its future adherents with fine, proscription, or imprisonment.

That observations such as these will be received by the friends of Methodism with considerable displeasure, may be easily conjectured, from the irritability which former attacks, however feeble and unskilful, have invariably excited. The pamphlets that have made their appearance in reply to the "Hints" of a Barrister, sufficiently evince how little the bigotry of fanaticism is calculated to purify the mind, or refine the temper. Such excessive sensibility is both unbecoming and injudicious. The tranquillity of innocence remains equally unmoved by the insinuations of unjust suspicion, and



the bolder falsehoods of interested malignity ; but wickedness is always jealous of discovery ; the slightest insinuation is sufficient to alarm its cowardice ; and, instead of the calm intrepidity of virtue, it displays either the violence of oppression, or the noisy blustering of rage and impotence.

The early part of Mr. Newton's life contains little that is interesting. He seems to have been, like many other neglected little boys, profligate and indolent. In his fifteenth year, he was placed in a mercantile situation, at Alicant, in Spain. Here he chanced to meet with Bennett's Christian Oratory ; and, "the course of life recommended in it appearing very desirable," he "began to pray, to read the Scriptures, and to keep a diary." He "even began to think himself religious ;" but soon abandoned these first faint efforts of devotion, to return to his more congenial habits of licentiousness and blasphemy.

It would be useless to trace him through all his alternations of belief and infidelity, of self-denial and intemperance. Even at this early period of his life, that vanity which distinguished him at a more venerable age, and in a prouder situation, seems to have governed his mind with unbounded influence. He had already learned to consider himself as the object of a peculiar Providence. Every incident that occurred in the common intercourse of life, was magnified into a special interference of the Deity ; and some of the circumstances attending them, are related with a precision of detail little calculated to repress those feelings of suspicion which are excited by the uniform tendency of his narrative. One of these miracles we shall extract, as a justification of our distrust, and a fair specimen of his manner.

"The scene presented to my imagination was the harbour of Venice, where I had lately been. I thought it was night, and my watch on the deck ; and that, as I was walking to and fro, by myself, a person came to me, and brought me a ring, with an express charge to keep it carefully, assuring me, that while I preserved the ring I should be happy and successful ; but, if I

“lost or parted with it, I must expect nothing but trouble and  
“misery. I accepted the present and the terms willingly, not in  
“the least doubting my own care to preserve it, and highly satis-  
“fied to have my happiness in my own keeping. I was engaged  
“in these thoughts, when a second person came to me, and, ob-  
“serving the ring on my finger, took occasion to ask me some  
“questions concerning it. I readily told him its virtues; and his  
“answer expressed surprise at my weakness in expecting such  
“effects from a ring. I think he reasoned with me some time, on  
“the impossibility of the thing, and at length urged me, in direct  
“terms, to throw it away. At first I was shocked at the proposal,  
“but his insinuations prevailed. I began to reason and doubt,  
“and at last plucked it off my finger, and dropt it over the ship’s  
“side into the water, which it had no sooner touched than I saw,  
“at the same instant, a terrible fire burst out, from a range of  
“mountains (a part of the Alps) which appeared at some distance  
“behind the city of Venice. I saw the hills as distinct as if awake,  
“and that they were all in flames. I perceived, too late, my  
“folly; and my tempter, with an air of insult, informed me, that  
“all the mercy God had reserved for me was comprised in that  
“ring, which I had wilfully thrown away. I understood that I  
“must now go with him to the burning mountains, and that all the  
“flames I saw, were kindled on my account. I trembled, and was  
“in a great agony, so that it was surprising that I did not then  
“awake; but my dream continued; and when I thought myself  
“upon the point of a constrained departure, and stood self-con-  
“demned without plea, or hope, suddenly either a third person,  
“or the same who brought the ring at first, I am not certain which,  
“came to me, and demanded the cause of my grief. I told him  
“the plain case, confessing that I had ruined myself wilfully, and  
“deserved no pity. He blamed my rashness, and asked me whe-  
“ther I should be wiser if I had my ring again? I could hardly  
“answer to this, for I thought it was gone beyond recall. I be-  
“lieve, indeed, I had not time to answer, before I saw this unex-  
“pected friend go down under the water, just in the spot where I  
“had dropt it, and he soon returned, bringing the ring with him.  
“The moment he came on board, the flames in the mountains were  
“extinguished, and my seducer left me. Then was the prey taken  
“from the hand of the mighty, and the lawful captive delivered.  
“My fears were at an end, and with joy and gratitude I approach-  
“ed my kind deliverer, to receive the ring again, but he refused to  
“return it, and spoke to this effect, &c. &c. On that, I awoke  
“in a state of mind not to be described. I could hardly eat, or  
“sleep, or transact any necessary business for two or three days;  
“but the impression soon wore off, and in a little time I totally  
“forgot it; and I think it hardly recurred to my mind again till  
“several years afterwards.” Pages 23, 24, &c.

It surely requires but little acuteness to discover that this dream is merely a *waking* one. It is repeated with the utmost minuteness of detail by a man who confesses, that for several years he had not the least remembrance of any of the attending circumstances. So surprizing a metaphysical phenomenon never occurred to the imagination of Locke, or gratified the researches of Wanley. It is extraordinary that he should never have amused the tedium of a two-years voyage by relating so wonderful a story to his ship-mates, and that it never occurred to his recollection in those moments of thought, “in which hope came in,” as a source of additional consolation.

Even were the internal evidence of such a tale of a nature less suspicious, we should scarcely be inclined to contemplate its publication with very favourable sentiments. If relations like this be once admitted, on the mere personal responsibility of the individual, to have the authority of evidence, the visionary ravings of the most designing impostor, or the most miserable fanatic, must be received as decisive on every question of controversial divinity. The dreams of Mahomet, and the prophecies of Brothers, remain no longer an object of abhorrence to the divine, or derision to the philosopher. Their reveries have the same claim to the respect of the good, and the admiration of the wise, as the reveries of Mr. Newton, and must be considered as indisputable evidence, that these two celebrated characters were the peculiar favourites of the Almighty.

These pretensions however do not so much display, in Mr. Newton's instance, the weakness of vanity, as the guilt of uncharitableness. Every infidel with whom he has once been acquainted, is sure to be drowned; every storm which blows him safe to harbour, is a source of utter destruction to his spiritual and temporal enemies; and whenever a boat in which he ought to have sailed, is upset, or a post which he ought to have defended is reduced, (and such circumstances occur with surprizing frequency,) some unfortunate being, less favoured by



Providence than himself, is sent, by a special interference, to supply his place.

To suppose that such relations are always the production of falsehood or malignity, would be to display a very superficial knowledge of the human heart, but they shew in a striking light the influence of misguided enthusiasm on the faculties of its victims. To pervert the imagination, to debilitate the judgment, and to deprive the mind of every power of philosophical investigation, has always been the evident effect of Calvinistic Methodism. By a constant indulgence in the vanity natural to his character, Mr. Newton gradually learned to consider every action of his life as proceeding from a supernatural impulse, and to trace, in the succession of distant and trivial events, connexion of design and unity of purpose. A man who has once exalted himself to an elevation with the Deity, must consider the common objects of human speculation as too trivial for his notice. To him a span and a league are of the same length, a minute and a year of the same duration. The lapse of time, and the succession of space, are as little regarded in the production of a modern enthusiast, as in the dramas of Shakspeare. Had not some such unfortunate perversion of the mind affected Mr. Newton, he must have discovered, that supposing himself to be really the instrument of Heaven, and subject to the immediate direction of a superior power, all exertion on his part, either for spiritual instruction, or temporal prosperity, were utterly superfluous. He who traces the hand of the Almighty in every operation of his mind, and every adventure of his life, is equally secure from the danger of present calamity, and of future punishment. Even his sins are those of his Creator ; he has no volition of his own, but must resign himself in helpless apathy to the disposal of Omnipotence.

After many voyages to sea, and many quarrels with his father, Mr. Newton was elevated, in 1743, to the rank of midshipman on-board the *Harwich*, into which vessel he had been impressed. In this situation his "delight and habitual

practice was wickedness." When upon the quarter-deck, he formed an acquaintance with an infidel, who contributed, with the aid of Shaftesbury's characteristics, to "plunge him still deeper in infidelity." This man of course perishes at sea, and Mr. Newton soon profited so much by his lessons, as to become a martyr to their efficacy. Having, by some means or other, escaped from the ship, he was publicly whipt for desertion, and reduced to the rank of a common seaman; and, had he not been reserved as a special instrument of grace, would certainly have drowned himself! From this state of degradation he was somewhat relieved, by the providential cutting down of a hammock on a certain "memorable morning." To this miraculous occurrence he ascribes his removal on-board a slave-ship, which soon after landed him on the Island of Benanoes.

The first year of his residence on this island was passed in a state of wretchedness, which the most miserable victims of European avarice appear to have contemplated with a mingled sentiment of disgust and compassion. While the lowest slaves of the colony considered themselves as degraded by his society, they had so much feeling for his distress, as to supply him, when destitute of food, with the means of protracting life from their own miserable pittance. Yet during this period of unutterable misery, he never suffered one virtuous idea to occupy his mind, or one religious expression to escape from his lips. He was as much an object of abhorrence for his depravity, as of pity for his misfortunes; and the tortures of body and mind which he endured, instead of producing one sentiment of fear and repentance, seem only to have exasperated him beyond the common bounds of human wickedness. At the expiration of a year, he was relieved from this state of wretchedness by being transferred to another master, and soon afterwards released from his captivity by the arrival of a Guinea trader. We shall not trace him through all the revolutions of opinion, or vicissitudes of fortune, in which this part of his narrative is so copious. It will be sufficient to relate, that this extraor-

dinary victim of every depravity which can render the human character disgusting or contemptible, who was, within three weeks of the conclusion of his voyage, a liar, a blasphemer, and an infidel, and whom no human being, however stupid or credulous, could have suspected of a single virtue, was metamorphosed, on his arrival in the harbour of Lochwilly in Ireland, into a serious professor of religion, a regular attendant at church, and a hopeful embryo of fanaticism!

By ascribing this sudden metamorphosis to the dangers of ship-wreck, Mr. Newton has unwarily admitted, what the experience of every day must convince us to be true, that the religion of Methodism is the religion of fear, and is more frequently the effect of despair than of rational conviction. Even allowing, however, for the natural influence of terror on a feeble intellect, so strange a metamorphosis must appear, to some people, extremely wonderful. But, when it is remembered that Mr. Newton was one of the Elect, then astonishment will cease. There is a peculiar affection of the mind, which is very familiar to the frequenters of the Tabernacle, but with which those who have not the transcendant honour of being enrolled amongst the brethren are seldom gratified. This affection is frequently confounded, by the vulgar, with intoxication or hysterics, and some weak pretenders to medical skill have been known to mistake it for insanity. Against men who commit such blunders as those, the gates of happiness are for ever shut; they are in a state of reprobation, from which they can only be relieved by the prayers of a Hill, and the exhortations of a Cecil.

To speak more seriously, we are by no means inclined to believe in the actual truth of those spiritual inspirations, and religious impulses, on which the enthusiasts of every age and nation have founded their claim to exclusive sanctity. The church of England admits, it is true, the actual influence of grace in assisting the sincere exertions of the virtuous; but it denies, that either its operation is perceptible, or that it is ever



so powerful as to render the exertions of those who are favoured by its assistance, unnecessary or presumptuous. The same arguments which apply so forcibly to Mr. Newton's opinions respecting predestination, will apply with equal plausibility to his doctrine of the omnipotence of grace. That influence, in fact, which guides the actions of a man, must necessarily direct the thoughts which produce those actions; and it will be difficult to prove, that the supernatural impression on the mind which conducts him through the labyrinth of a wood, is of a different nature from that which enables him to unravel the mazes of theology. The authority of the Apostles, which is usually produced as decisive evidence of a perceptible influence, is little to the purpose, unless it can be proved that the modern pretenders to such an influence are gifted with actual inspiration. When Paul, or Peter, informs us, that "he feels the grace of God within him," he speaks with the authority of one of the Apostles. The same knowledge which gave authority to their writings, enabled them to observe the operations of the Holy Spirit upon their own minds; but this privilege may be reasonably supposed to be denied, like the other temporary dispensations of Christianity, to the less favoured Christians of the later ages.

Unless the influence of this pretended operation be of a nature perfectly different from every other impression made upon the human intellect, or unless it amount to actual inspiration, it is difficult to imagine any means by which it can be distinguished from nervous excitation. We are afraid that, to a man who has once persuaded himself that he is the favoured subject of these mysterious impulses, it will be difficult to discriminate between the action of spiritual and material agents. Even the social cheerfulness of common life may be referred to something supernatural. The effusions of amorous enthusiasm may be mistaken for the inspirations of religious ardour, and the orgies of libertinism for the raptures of celestial love!

There is surely a degree of impiety, by no means consistent with that "trembling adoration" which the Methodists so ostentatiously display on other occasions, in supposing that the Deity would subject the operation of his Spirit on the human mind to be mistaken for the delirium of unlawful pleasure.

It will be found, on enquiry, that the great mass of the dissenting congregations is formed of persons who, from the nature of their employment, from constitutional habit, or the mental agitation to which their situation exposes them, are peculiarly subject to nervous melancholy. Of this description are old maids, the lower class of shop-keepers, who are subjected to daily attendance behind the counter, without sufficient business to amuse them, or sufficient wealth to enable them to spend that part of the day, which they now devote to gin, and Methodism, in an excursion to a tea-garden. This mass is also made up of persons engaged in sedentary professions, such as tailors, shoemakers, and weavers, and of labourers in any kind of gloomy and unsocial employment, such as the potters of Etruria, the colliers of Newcastle, and the forgers of Carron. It is more than foolish to refer to the operation of divine grace for an effect which may so much more simply and intelligibly be accounted for by a reference to natural causes. The superstitions of former ages ascribed insanity to the possession of the devil; the more impious fanatics of the present day have the presumption to ascribe it to the personal influence of the Deity.

That pious frenzy which drives such crowds to the Mad-house of Blackfriars, will appear still more strongly to be only a particular symptom of nervous melancholy, when it is considered how many among the middle and lower classes of the Methodists have continual recourse to stimulants and cordials. It is difficult to find a man or woman in this rank who does not either chew tobacco, or take snuff, or swallow opium, or drink spirituous liquors; nor is this so much the general characteristic of the lower orders of society, as the constant and pecu-

liar accompaniment of Methodism. If the disciples of Mr. Newton chuse to assert that the melancholy is not the cause of the religion, but the religion of the melancholy, let them have the full benefit of such an argument. To suppose that devotion is inconsistent with cheerfulness, is not only contrary to the general observation of the moralist, but to the example and the precept of Christ himself. The gloom of fanaticism is admirably calculated to repress those social and virtuous feelings, which refine the manners and exalt the character. Those delightful images of loveliness, and dignity, in which religion beguiles the solitary hours, and confirms the virtuous resolutions of the rational Christian, are a stranger to the perturbed imagination of the Methodist. To him she appears only in the semblance of an inexorable fury, "whose iron scourge and torturing hour" afflict him with hopeless misery in this world, and eternal torture in the next.

After the pompous account which Mr. Newton has given us of his "wonderful deliverance from the power of sin," it will no doubt excite the indignation of some, and the ridicule of others, to be informed, that the first proof which he gave of the sincerity of his conversion, was his taking the situation of mate on board a slave-ship! It is true that he had previously refused the place of master, but his refusal did not originate from any sentiments of religion or humanity, but from a doubt of his own ability to execute the duties of so exalted a situation. His business, while upon the coast, was to purchase, as articles of traffic, those very slaves who had supplied him, in the hour of distress, with the means of prolonging a miserable existence. It is surely sufficient to excite the abhorrence of every one possessed of reason or humanity, against the cant of Methodism, that this person, after being a teacher of the religion of love and charity for more than twenty years, and after being for that period the idol of a class of devotees, who make almost exclusive pretensions to the "communion of love," should, in the decline of age, and the coolness of re-



tirement, exclaim in the language of pious exultation, "I never knew sweeter or more frequent hours of divine communion than in my two last voyages to Guinea, when I was either almost excluded from society, on shipboard, or when on shore among the natives." An uninitiated observer may surely be forgiven, if he supposes that the religion (if it deserves that name) of which such a man can be a favoured minister, has no influence on the heart. It is merely "a tale told by an ideot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." "The melancholy madness of religion, without the inspiration."

Mr. Newton was at length obliged, by illness, to relinquish the profession of slave-dealer; and, in 1755, we find him comfortably settled as tide-surveyor of the Port of Liverpool. If we may judge, however, by the complacency with which he enumerates the number of his attendants, "the handsome six-oared boat in which he rowed about in state," and the other "forms and trappings" of this office, they had nearly as many charms for his imagination as the clerical vestments in which he afterwards thumped the cushion of St. Mary Woolnoth.

He was now preparing to shine forth in a more conspicuous light, as one of the luminaries of Methodism, and as a lamp to illuminate the darkness of the Church of England. Some men would have been rather puzzled in what manner to reconcile their duty to the latter with their inclination to the former. Such trifling difficulties were easily overcome by the superior zeal and genius of Mr. Newton. "His first thought (he informs us) was to join the Dissenters, from a *supposition* that he could not take the required subscription; but Mr. C. in a conversation on these points, moderated (not removed) his scruples; and preferring the Established Church, in some respects, he took a title from him." It is impossible to conceive a plainer confession of perjury than this. He explicitly acknowledges that, at the moment of subscription, there were many respects in which he preferred the doctrines, or

the discipline, of Methodism; he allows that his decision was not so much influenced by his approval of the articles of the Church of England, as by its superiority in the conveniences it afforded to the dissemination of his peculiar opinions. He takes care to conceal both the nature of his original scruples, and the arguments by which they were moderated; and from the repeated attempts at an apology for this part of his conduct, he shews that he labours under a painful consciousness of having sacrificed his integrity to his interest.

His reasons for wishing to become a minister at all, are far from satisfactory.

“The first desires (says he) of this sort, in my own mind, arose many years ago, from reflection on Galatians i. 23, 24. I could but wish for such a public opportunity to testify the riches of divine grace. I thought I was, above most living, a fit person to proclaim that faithful saying, that *Jesus Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners*; and as my life had been full of remarkable turns, and I seemed selected to shew what the Lord could do, I was in some hopes that, perhaps sooner or later, he might call me to his service.”

Knowledge of any kind is of little service, if its possessor be incapable of communicating it, or if his attempts at communicating it be only calculated to excite contempt or disgust. Mr. Cecil informs us, that “Mr. N. did not generally aim at accuracy, in the composition of his sermons, nor at any address in the delivery of them. His utterance was far from clear, and his attitudes ungraceful.” A consciousness of these peculiarities (for we can scarcely believe that the vanity of Mr. Newton was so great, or the prudence of his friends so little as to suffer him to remain entirely ignorant of them) would have induced any one, more modest or less zealous than himself, to doubt whether the assumption of the clerical office would tend to his own honour or the edification of his hearers. Perhaps, however, the imperceptible bias of self-interest overpowered these, and less obvious considerations. There is surely no great difficulty in discovering, without the aid of the long catalogue given us by Mr. Newton, many reasons which

might induce him to prefer the undisturbed enjoyment of a handsome salary, and the conversation of enlightened and respectable society, to the anxieties of an uncertain income, and the fatigues of a laborious office.

A man, with the pretensions of Mr. Newton, must be too apt to introduce into the pulpit his own feelings and opinions more frequently than is consistent with the interests of truth, or the wishes of his congregation. If his personal experience be admitted as a guide on every disputed point of doctrine, there is no absurdity which the enlightened part of his audience may not be induced to reverence, as one of the truths of Christianity. The preacher *may*, indeed, be both wise and virtuous, but he may, with equal probability, be foolish and wicked; and how are the auditors of such men to distinguish between the Christian and hypocrite? Even were there no danger of such a deception, we should fear that the weakness of human nature would prevail over general principles of virtue, or general firmness of character. The vehemence of transitory passion, or the pride of momentary exultation, might draw from the lips of a really pious and sensible man, expressions which, in his moments of reflection, he would consider with astonishment and sorrow. There is no fault into which extempore preachers (amongst whom Mr. N. must certainly be numbered, notwithstanding his use of notes) are so apt to fall, or which a man, who has the real interest of his congregation at heart, will so carefully avoid, as egotism. Whatever may have been the impression of Mr. Newton's sermons on the ignorant part of his audience, it is certain that the respectable members of the Church of England, whom the vicinity of St. Mary Woolnoth induced to hear him, were too often tempted to wish for a little more about religion, and a little less about himself.

Having thus accompanied Mr. Newton through all his trials of faith, and changes of fortune, till his final elevation to the pulpit of St. Mary Woolnoth, we shall merely fulfil our duty



as biographers by recording, that he died at the age of 82, in the year 1807. We trust that Mr. Cecil will forgive us for compressing one half of his book into so small a compass, but as it must be difficult to convince the reader, by any epitome of ours, how busy a man may be for twenty years in doing nothing, we thought it our duty to refer, for the gratification of their curiosity on this point, to the volume itself.

In the beginning of our criticism, we ventured to express some faint doubts of Mr. Newton's veracity. An attentive perusal of the latter part of his narrative, has convinced us that we were deplorably mistaken. Many of his later assertions are so far from exciting the least scepticism in our minds, that it is impossible for incredulity itself to doubt, for a single moment, of their truth. That a man who is at Rome, is at Rome; that old age is a mortal disease, from which no one recovers; that a miser would pray earnestly for gold, if he thought that prayer would obtain it; that there are critical times of danger; and that a boy who dies before the age of twelve, can never be a man; are assertions no less remarkable for their truth than for their novelty and importance.

Of Mr. Cecil it will be sufficient to say, that he is nearly equal to his prototype in elegance, modesty, learning, and judgement. This praise we had intended to qualify with some explanatory observations; but luckily remembering, that the living resentment of Mr. Cecil, might be much more terrific in its consequences than the ghostly indignation of Mr. Newton, we at first relinquished so dangerous a task, with a due sense of our own inability to sustain the attacks of an infuriated Methodist. We remembered also, that the Elect are not to be judged by those laws which regulate the conduct and character of other men. They have a peculiar dispensation for ignorance and folly, which secures them from all the terrors of literary punishment. To men who write in the power of faith, and under the influence of grace, the fulminations of the critic are the explosion of a pop-gun; the denunciations of the

moralist, the thunder of an infant's rattle. It is really dangerous to contend with personages, who not only can pour forth the torrents of literary abuse, but hurl the thunderbolts of spiritual damnation. Besides, in what part of his literary character is an Evangelical writer vulnerable? His language is too sublime for vulgar apprehension; and you have, therefore, no right to censure his obscurity; to expect that a man, who soars into the empyrean regions of "celestial mystery," should descend to the minutiae of grammar, is ridiculous. The fact which he relates cannot be doubted, for it is impossible that a man, whose thoughts and actions are under the immediate control of the Deity, can lie; and the conclusions that he draws must necessarily be just, for they are the conclusions of inspiration. In this dilemma, a writer, who has no wish for the transcendent honour of being anathematized from every pulpit, tub, or tree, by every dear, sweet, godly man in the United Kingdom; who has no ambition to be metamorphosed into a raw-head and bloody-bones, for the amusement of the babes of Grace; who thinks that there is "sweeter music to an author's ear," than the chidings of old maids, and who can by no means be persuaded that the breath of Dr. Hawker is half so odoriferous "as the soft gale that breathes upon a bank of violets," would shrink, as we were almost inclined to do, from so dangerous an enterprise, and leave "the sons of Satan, and the daughters of the Devil," to be trampled beneath the unpolluted sanctity of Methodism. A spirit, however, of a different nature, we are afraid, from that which inflames the followers of Cecil, excites us, notwithstanding our original resolution, and our present fears, to proceed as follows:—

A slight inspection of the annual accounts, which are given by the regular Methodists themselves, of their number, can present to the reader but an imperfect idea of their actual success in the conversion of proselytes. The list of the last year estimates the real number of the brethren at about one hundred thousand; but the names contained in that list, are those only



of the class members, who do not form more than one twentieth part of the regular congregations. Neither does this statement include the frequenters of those churches, the service of which is administered by real Methodists, in holy orders. The various seceders from the regular body, in consequence of trifling disputes respecting discipline, the presbyterians, and all the other sectaries, whom, as they all present in England the same general features of character, and as a distinct examination of each would lead to endless prolixity, we have distinguished by the general title of Methodists, amount to about a million.

Nor is the whole of the danger, to be apprehended from Methodism, to be estimated by the mere amount of its numbers. The greater part of its votaries are as active as they are zealous, anxious to secure their eternal felicity, and their present exaltation among the Elect, by labouring continually in what appears, to their disordered imaginations, "the work of God." Nor are they less incited by temporal pride than spiritual enthusiasm. They look, with envious discontent, on those prerogatives which are essential to the existence of an Established Church. Their deficiency in actual strength is compensated for by superior address; and it is easy to foresee the issue of a contest between cunning and enthusiasm on one side, and unsuspecting indolence on the other.

Nor are these efforts to be despised as the irregular and random exertions of powerless enthusiasm. Their direct attacks, if they have not the disciplined regularity of practised warfare, have much of the energy of it: their gradual approaches are not without system, and obstinacy is the character of the sect. They are found in our universities; they insinuate themselves into the service of a church, of which the revenues are the only appendages, that they do not contemplate with hereditary hostility. There is a latitude of conscience and a leaning towards their own interest, of which the *quondam* slave-trader, whose Memoirs we have been reviewing, is not a solitary



instance. It is well observed by a learned Prelate, whose letters are before the public, that *money makes all speculation subside, as grease does all tumult in heady liquors.* Though they have a decided preference for the nostrums of a quack, they can occasionally swallow the prescriptions of a regular professor, if he takes good care to gild his pills.

As for the Senate, it is to be hoped, that they will think themselves too holy to come there; and that the good genius of Britain, in his guardianship of our inestimable Constitution, will keep them and their favourites out of the Sanctuary of St. Stephen at least, wherever else they may be found.

If, indeed, it could be made apparent, that the particular consequences of Methodism were balanced by its general tendency, and that, whilst it propagated delusion, it was yet productive of external decorum, something might be said to reconcile us to absurdity so harmless: but an apology of this kind is neither sanctioned by our experience of the individual character of the most favoured of its proselytes, nor on observation of the manners and principles of the age.

One remark, however, we must beg leave to offer, inasmuch as it arises from the peculiar exigency of the present moment—our country, now on the very point, as it should seem, of being reduced to stand alone against the domineering power of France, has need of all the energy, which the conspiring patriotism of its natives can unanimously exert for its protection. In this situation, it is above all things most devoutly to be wished, that our hearts may be with God, to conciliate his good Providence in our behalf; but, alas! the hour is come, when our hands must be upon our swords to defend his altars, and the blessings which his bounty has vouchsafed to grant us. Like the builders of the Temple of Jerusalem, he, that handles the mason's trowel, must also wield the weapon of the soldier. When the word is given out—“To your tents, oh Israel!” will the lank-haired fanatics come out of their tabernacles and charge the enemy? No; it

is not the part that they will take; we are well persuaded that they will leave that work to be done by the reprobates in red jackets; and, indifferent to the fate of their country, amidst the groanings of the Spirit, denounce anathemas upon those very heroes, who, in the defence of every thing that is dear and sacred, are shedding their brave blood, and breathing out their generous souls, upon the field of battle.

Having thus endeavoured, with a due sense of the inadequacy of our powers to the importance of the subject, to give a hasty sketch of the dangers to which the national religion is exposed, we must leave the remedy to the wisdom of our hierarchy, and the patriotism of our senators.

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THE LIFE AND PONTIFICATE OF LEO THE TENTH, BY WILLIAM ROSCOE. *Quarto, 4 vols. ; Octavo, 6 vols. Printed for T. Cadell and W. Davies, London. 1805.*

THIS work, which is presented to the public as the Life and Pontificate of Leo the Tenth, is, in fact, a multifarious compound of history and biography. As a Life of Leo, it ought to contain a simple narrative of his birth, his education, and his actions, with a faithful picture of the manners and character of the man. This would have been Biography. A Pontificate is the reign of a Pope as a sovereign prince: it comprehends the administration of government, civil and ecclesiastical, within the Papal dominions, as well as the transactions of the Pope with foreign states: it is, in this sense, the proper subject of history. These would be the extreme boundaries of the subject, if the contents of this book corresponded with the title-page; and the work, even then, would have been too extensive.



It flatters the vanity of an author to do something on a wide scale; and it pleases a young reader to suppose that he is acquiring two kinds of knowledge at once: but the fact is, that authors cannot execute, and readers cannot acquire efficiently, more than one thing at the same time. Simplicity of plan is the first great rule of composition. The life of an individual may, in some of its events, be intimately connected with the history of a nation; but they are seldom well executed in conjunction. History is the mirror of statesmen: Biography is the guide of private life. They require a different relish; they suppose different pursuits; and having distinct properties, if they are mixed, the interest is neutralized. Such is the common effect of a double subject.

But the book, now under examination, is more various than it professes: it should have been intitled *Memoirs of the Private Life of Leo the Tenth*, with a *History of his Pontificate*, i. e. his *Public Transactions*; including partial histories of France, Germany, Spain, England, and the several States of Italy, during the lives of Leo and some of his predecessors; besides a copious account of the *Literature of the age*, and a compendious history of the *Reformation*. These are the principal contents of the book: but a great variety of other subjects are incidentally discussed, and it comprises withal an *Abridgement of the Lives of several eminent Statesmen, Warriors, and Scholars*.

Now, it is evident that such a compilation (if it deserves a name) is rather an universal *Dictionary* than a *History*. But, as there are some shining examples in this rambling style of writing, it is necessary to observe, that some writers have the talent of maintaining the interest of the narrative in spite of frequent interruptions. This is the triumph of genius over art.

Digressions may be entertaining and instructive, as mere independent narratives; or they may be close and short, and interwoven with the leading subject so artfully as to make



no sensible breach in the line of narration. The suspension of interest may be momentary : by a short intermission, the mind is diverted and relieved. But the digressions in the *Life of Leo* are long and dull and disjointed : the reader is hurried from subject to subject, and from country to country, without rest,—without amusement,—without edification ; characters are half introduced, incidents are half explained, and almost every subject pursued by intervals :—There is a large company, but all strangers. The author, indeed, is always in the foreground, a conspicuous figure ; but there is scarcely another personage in the book, with whom the reader is fairly acquainted.

The plan of this work will better appear by a short enumeration of the principal contents.

The first Volume consists of six chapters, with a Dissertation and a long Appendix. It has two main subjects ; the Expedition of Charles the Eighth into Italy ; and the Life, Transactions, and Character of Alexander the Sixth, and the Borgia family. These subjects are delivered piecemeal ; and the reader feels little concern or interest about them. One whole chapter (the second) is occupied with an account of Learning and Learned Men. A partial account of the affairs of Florence, of Naples, of Milan, and of the Holy See, under Innocent VIII. is scattered through the volume ; and a very small portion of the remainder is, at long intervals, assigned to the memoirs of the person whose history is promised in the title-page. The Dissertation following the sixth chapter, is upon the Character of Lucretia Borgia, the daughter of Alexander the Sixth ; and the Appendix contains a number of unimportant documents, which must soon again return to that oblivion from which they have been so undeservedly rescued. The Volume altogether consists of more than 400 pages. Not fifty of these are bestowed upon the proper subject of the history.

The contents of the second Volume are so various, that it

would be endless to give a particular account of them. One chapter contains a history of the League of Cambray with the Operations of the Allies against the Venetians. A desultory account of the Contest between the French and Spaniards for the Dominion of Naples, and the Establishment of their Influence in Italy, runs through several other chapters. It contains also a broken narrative of the reign of two or three Popes ; and a long story (if it is collected and taken together) of Julius II. with something about the Medici, and their endeavours to return to Florence ; and something about the Duke of Ferrara and the family of Este ; about Henry VIII. of England, and Louis XII. ; and the battle of Flodden, and the battle of Spurs ; and the Swiss, and the Portuguese, and the Germans ; and something about every thing ;—and here and there a little bit of poetry to sweeten the history. There is, moreover, one whole chapter in this volume also devoted to Literature.

The two first chapters of the third Volume are of the same diversified nature ; and then the machinery on a sudden is removed ; the scene is changed ; and the full dawn of the Reformation breaks like magic upon the slumbering reader : but the subject is only introduced and partially discussed in the fifteenth chapter ; during the rest of this volume it is suspended. Being, however, one of the most prominent subjects in the book, (if any one ingredient in so various a mixture deserves such a preference,) it ought perhaps to give a name to the whole composition. Then follow two long chapters on Italian Poets and Italian Writers, and Reciters of Latin Verse. The last chapter of the Volume comprehends a sketch of Selim and the Turks ; an account of the Contest for the Imperial Crown, between Charles of Austria and Francis the First ; and a variety of other topics, interspersed with occasional notices of Leo the Tenth.

The last Volume consists of six Chapters ; three of them are upon Literature and the Fine Arts : one traces the progress

of the Reformation: one is upon various points of History: and towards the conclusion, the circumstances attending the Death of Leo are related, quite enough at length, but not in due proportion to other matters, which come by intrusion into a history of Leo the Tenth. The last chapter contains the Estimate of his Character: and although it appears throughout the history, as far as it relates to Leo, that he was profligate in conduct---in manners licentious---dissembling and treacherous in policy; it is not easy to be discovered by the Estimate, whether these are unamiable qualities.

Such is the outline of the work, which bears the name of the Life and Pontificate of Leo the Tenth: and to those, who were unacquainted with the art of book-making, it must have appeared surprising how the incidents of so short a life should have furnished matter for four quarto volumes. But the secret is now understood: the writer on Theology may swell his work with a regular treatise on Moral Philosophy;---the Jurist makes a digression upon Commerce;---and the Political Economist, upon Law. The Physician compiles a book upon Diseases; which comprehends Botany, and Chemistry, and Mineralogy. The Biographer supplants the Historian; and the Historian, if he had foreseen the days of universal information, might have anticipated the labours of the Biographer.

If each author is thus to invade the province of his neighbour, all subjects, and every species of writing, must in the end be resolved into one. The Encyclopædia will supersede all other works.

To relate important facts unknown before, is a favour not to be forgotten by posterity. To give a new dress to well-known facts, not hitherto collected or arranged, may deserve praise for the attempt, although the execution is feeble. But the foreign digressions kidnapped into the Life of Leo, relate facts which are to be found elsewhere, better told and more skilfully arranged.

The author is aware of this radical defect in his plan; and



the Preface offers a justification; (pp. iii. to vii.) He there speaks with rapture of the morsels of Biography which are to be found in celebrated historians. If a short anecdote of Leo the Tenth occurs in Rapin, or in Hume, or even a summary of his character dispatched in a few sentences,—the Biographer can afford his admiration. But then he indemnifies himself very amply by assuming a right to mix History with his Biography, like active drugs in a neutral menstruum.

But to return to the Preface. It is to be observed, that of the four historians cited in the passage, there are three that seldom use the licence of digression;—never to the extent recommended and adopted by our author.

Livy is truly a domestic historian. Tacitus is a philosopher: he retards the current of history, to exhibit himself in observations;—he digresses; but he is never far from home, his excursions are never long. If histories of Persia and Greece were to be found in the Annals of Tacitus; if the life of Agricola and the manners of the Germans had found a place in the histories of the Empire; it would have been a great example of bad taste, but far short of the universality assumed by the author of Leo.

Gibbon indeed is digressive; he introduces a long dissertation upon the rise of Christianity: he dwells upon manners; he dilates upon Revenues and Population: and the interest of the story is affected accordingly.

The “Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire” possesses a merit distinct from historical excellence; a merit not to be claimed by the author of Leo the Tenth. And it is proper to observe, that the digressions in Leo occupy almost the whole work;—thus bearing about the same proportion to the main subject, that, in “The Decline and Fall,” the main subject bears to the digressions.—If Gibbon had inserted, in the life of one single Emperor, all the digressions of his work, the cases would have approached to a parallel.

The digressions of Hume are generally detached from the

body of the history. If ever they appear in the narrative, they are short, and near to the subject. If an account of the state of foreign nations is introduced (as in the beginning of the reign of Henry the Eighth), it is for the purpose of shewing how an English army came to be employed in the service of Spain at the siege of Pampeluna. The policy and the current history of all the principal states of Europe is dispatched in eight pages, which are amply sufficient for the occasion; and then the history of England is resumed.—In the following chapter of the same reign, two or three pages are assigned to an account of the competition between Charles V. and Francis I. for the imperial crown: but the little, that is so interspersed, is inseparably connected with the policy of the English cabinet; and it does not lead to long histories of France, Spain, and Germany.—So, in a third chapter, the war carried into Italy by Francis, the battle of Pavia, and the captivity of the French monarch, occupy three pages of the history;—not through ostentation; not to make a quarto instead of an octavo; not from false judgment or bad taste; but of necessity, in order to explain the reasons why Henry abandoned the alliance of the Emperor Charles, and attached himself to the falling fortunes of France.—In the chapter next ensuing, a single page on foreign affairs serves to ascertain the relation between England and other states, and to discover the motives by which Henry was actuated in maintaining or deserting his foreign alliances. The whole history of the reign consists of 240 pages: and of these the digressions occupy less than twenty. Is this an example to support an author, whose digressions are ten times as long as the principal subject?

A history of Turkey is not thought indispensable to account for the manners or events of that æra in the history of England, when the Turks first broke in upon the system of Europe, and established themselves in the provinces of Greece. Though it is very probable that the character of the English, among other nations, and the course of events throughout Europe might

have been affected by the operations of the Turks. When Hume is relating the story of those times, something by the way is said of the capture of Constantinople; but that event and its effects are summed up in half a page.

A man of letters, wanting the example of a desultory historian to justify his own digressions, would have selected Herodotus. But the Father of History published new facts; and the charm of his narration is irresistible: and yet the rambling is a defect. Herodotus is one of those beguiling models that allure to the imitation even of a blemish. Unity of action in History, which is the picture of actions, is the very dictate of nature. The Preface, however, is fruitful in arguments to justify this extravagant plan. It seems, that

“It would be impossible to form a correct idea of the character of an individual, without considering him in those relations by which he stands connected with the general transactions of the times in which he lived, and which in truth have not only displayed but in some measure formed his character.”

Now, if such a latitude is to be allowed in Biography, History will be, literally, endless: for the histories of all nations are in some degree connected; and all the events, which have happened from the beginning of time down to the present moment, may successively have influenced each other. If it is allowable to interweave, for the sake of explanation, histories of the Reformation,—of the expedition under Charles the Eighth into Italy,—of the siege of Pisa, and of the League of Cambray,—each longer than the part which relates to Leo the Tenth,—in a book which pretends to be a history of the Life and Pontificate of that personage; why then, in the History of England, to make it intelligible, would it not be proper to stitch-in Johnson's Lives of the Poets, and Campbell's Lives of the Admirals, and the Lives of all the English Worthies at length? and this in addition to general histories of other countries, which must be the first step according to this new plan of making matters intelligible; for surely it may be said



of History with as much truth in the case of a community, as of Biography in the case of an individual; that "it would be impossible to form a correct idea of the character of a nation, without considering it in those relations by which it stands connected with the general transactions of the times which are the subject of the history, and which in truth have not only displayed, but, in some measure, formed its character." So also the poets, the warriors, the statesmen, and the philosophers of a nation, contribute to form its character; and the history of the formation of their several characters, is part of the history of the nation; the events of their private histories being some of the remote contributory causes of the most important public events. There is some truth and justice in the rule if it is rightly understood; but if it is to be exemplified by the practice of the author of *Leo the Tenth*, upon this subtle philosophical plan of tracing up causes to their sources, we may range all over the world in the life and conspiracy of Guy Fawkes, or go back to the deluge in the history of the Maid of Orleans. It must however be observed, that the author does not rely with full confidence upon this happy doctrine of contributory causes, for it is one of the avowals of the Preface, that "the *intrinsic importance* of events" which happened (any where) in, or about, or near the age of his hero, was a powerful reason for inserting them at length.—So much for the plan of this long compilation.

On the principal facts of the historical part of the work, it would be superfluous to dilate. The substance of them is taken from Guicciardini, from Davila, from Robertson, and Hume; and the transformation they have suffered can be paralleled only by the mangled odes of Horace, when they have passed through a schoolboy's head, and issue in the shape of hexametres. There is a great parade in the preface about information obtained from various unpublished documents; one of the most important among these new documents, according to the author's own account, consists of an uninteresting correspon-

dence in which Lorenzo de Medici is concerned. Large extracts from the letters are published in the body of the history. They discover nothing more than the ordinary anxiety of a parent concerning the promotion of his son, and the extravagant adulations of some of Lorenzo's correspondents. The author does not seem to be aware, that it is not every action, not every event in the life of a great man, that deserves to be recorded; in some respects the tale of every man's life is the same. Selection is second only to fidelity in the character of the historian. An author invites severity, and insures contempt, if he is seen hovering in the track of eminent historians, to pick up rejected matter.

Such are the important facts now added to the records of History. If others are to be named, there is an account of the fire-works, shows, and ceremonies at the coronation of Leo the Tenth. We are informed, that this Pope had white hands, and very commonly decorated his fingers with rings. We find that he was pleased to cheat his greedy cardinals with savoury owl pies and bat puddings, or some such tricks. There is also a very particular account of the rain that fell when Giovanni de Medici went to pay his respects to the Pope, upon being made a cardinal; what a shower! and how they were drenched! the poor cardinal and his attendants. The author has done full justice to the incident. He could not have made more of it, if it had been an earthquake. A few other facts might be added, equally new perhaps and equally choice, and a confirmation of their disputable truth is afforded by long book-swelling papers in the Appendix. These are probably the important facts alluded to in the Preface as new facts. But much is said of new light thrown upon old facts. The death of Leo, whether effected by poison, is one of the cases mentioned. It is an attempt by disquisition, by argument, and inconclusive deduction; to render doubtful a fact which before stood upon unsatisfactory evidence. If then doubt is at all like darkness, the light introduced by Mr. R. is very faint

indeed. It is also worth observation, that many of the facts detailed in this book, and the inferences drawn from these facts, in the argumentative parts of the history, are founded upon the authority of some manuscript diaries, kept by an officer of the Pope's court. The only reason assigned by the author for the confidence, with which he receives so slender an evidence of improbable facts, is, that they are written with an "apparent accuracy and minuteness." Now, historical facts on record, and facts of any kind, well known to the public, and never disputed, are authentic enough to be inserted in a history. There is scarcely any other unexceptionable ground of reliance. That King William came from Holland, and landed in this country on a certain day, whether on record or not, no man doubts. That he was reserved in his temper, and forbidding in his manners, though it may not appear upon any public record, is universally known, as having been observed by many persons, and contradicted by none. It flows also by immediate inference from many other admitted facts; but is it of itself a sufficient ground of belief, that "extraordinary tales are found written in a diary, with an *apparent accuracy and minuteness* as to facts?"

But the opinions of this author do not need a refutation. For when he comes to the dissertation on the character of Lucretia Borgia, at the end of the volume, he forgets the matter of the Preface, as it was natural that a person should, who makes up so large a book, and so complicated. Undertaking, therefore, in this Dissertation, to argue for the modesty and chastity of Lucretia, he endeavours to falsify the assertion of a most consummate historian, who lived in the very age of Lucretia; he fights against the judgment of a doubting philosopher of modern times, who was not apt to admit facts without evidence—he is alone, or with a few nameless men, against the concurrent opinions of Guicciardini, of Moreri, of Henry Stephens, of Bale, and of Gibbon; and to this phalanx of authorities, he opposes some ingenious reasoning of his own, founded



upon partial histories; and he relies not a little upon the poetic adulations of a few needy dependents, or patronised authors, in the court of Lucretia. But as for Burchard, the author of that Diary so much praised for accuracy in the Preface, he dismisses him and his tales about the indecencies of Lucretia Borgia, and Alexander the Sixth, her father, with these words—

“To a short time subsequent to this period, we may, however, refer those abominable scenes of lewdness, which are said to have been transacted within the precincts of the apostolic palace, and which, however incredible, are recorded by Burchard, not only without a comment, but with as much indifference as if they were only the usual occurrences of the day.” But it is highly important to our present subject, to observe, that throughout the whole narrative of the *loquacious* master of the papal ceremonies, who seems, on no occasion, to have concealed what might disgrace either his superiors or himself, there appears not the most distant insinuation of that criminal intimacy between Alexander and his daughter, or between her and her brothers; which, if he had known, or suspected it to have existed, it is not likely, from the tenor of other parts of his narrative, that he would have been inclined wholly to conceal.”

The author in this place appears to doubt the story told in Burchard, without comment, and with so much indifference. If he believes it, as he ought, for the sake of the accuracy and minuteness, does he think it hard to believe any thing concerning a father and a daughter, joint eye-witnesses to such abominable scenes? What evidence does he require of incest? Something more than the presumption, which is admitted as a proof of adultery under a jealous system of jurisprudence. Does he think that Burchard must have seen the infamous act itself, if it had ever taken place? And is he incredulous, because Burchard does not relate the fact, whether seen or unseen? To hear every idle tale, and repeat it without examination, is the trade of a gossip. Testimony from such a source does not of itself deserve much attention. But it is obvious to observe that, in the Preface, Burchard is “the accurate.” In this place, and for this pur-

pose, he is the loquacious Burchard; and it is assumed, as ground to raise a conclusion, that he would have committed to paper even his suspicions, if any he had entertained. When Burchard saw the naked women dancing before the Pope and his daughter, not to mention the other exhibitions of that brutal night, what a mind must he have possessed to be devoid of suspicion!\*

The author's judgment on the degrees of credibility is somewhat singular. When a babbling journalist is unsupported, and his testimony rejected, or unheeded, by contemporary and subsequent historians, he is at once admitted for a sufficient witness, because he is accurate and minute; but when his evidence is corroborated by a host of Philosophers, and Critics, and Historians, he is rejected, although equally accurate and equally minute.

Of the plan of this work, and the complexion of the facts it contains, enough has been said for the present purpose and occasion. It is now time to examine the opinions; and this is the more necessary, because it bears throughout much more the character of an essay, or a dissertation, than a history. The author has followed the prevailing fashion of the times; his book, which ought to be the chronicle of other men's actions and opinions, serves occasionally as a machine for the dissemination of party politics. By the vehicle of history, he contrives to convey his private opinions in government and religion. He apes the misleading example of Gibbon, he affects a tone of insinuation against the intolerant spirit of Protestantism as opposed to Popery; imitating the affected liberality of the historian, who espoused the cause of Heathenism against Christianity. It is evident in many passages, but particularly in the following, that the author alludes to the disabilities and incapacities which affect the Roman Catholics:

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\* The story is related at length in a Latin paper in the Appendix.

“ Whosoever surveys the criminal code of the Lutheran and Calvinistic nations of Europe, and observes the punishments denounced against those who may dare to dissent, although upon the sincerest conviction, from the Established Creed ; and considers the dangers to which they are exposed in some countries, and the disabilities, by which they are stigmatized and oppressed in others, must admit that the important object with the friends and promoters of rational liberty has hitherto been but imperfectly accomplished ; and that the human mind, a slave in all ages, has rather changed its master than freed itself from servitude.” Vol. IV. p. 320.

But by what perversion of terms, by what factious extravagance of language, is a man called a slave, because he is not allowed to govern ? The legislature has removed all the penalties, which affected the life, the property, or the liberty of those, who profess the Roman-Catholic religion. They enjoy the free exercise of their faith and mode of worship. They are so protected by law, that no man disturbs their rights with impunity. But because they are not admitted to share a power which they have sometimes abused, by some distortion of the judgment the partisans of a certain faction declare that the Catholics are persecuted and enslaved.

If the friends of Catholic *equalization* (for the common term is false and insidious) had been content to say that no eventual danger is to be apprehended from the admission of Catholics to offices, in which they may direct or influence the operations of government, command divisions of the army, and make it the interest of large bodies of men to become or continue Papists, it would be a fair statement of the case, and a moderate answer might be given to it ; but, to such a rhapsody as the passage in Leo, there is but one reply :—it is unfair to persuade the country-people that Papists are burnt in Smithfield almost every market-day. The numbers of the Catholics in the sister kingdom are frequently urged as a reason for granting their present claims. Now, we know that, for two centuries of real oppression, the moderate claims of equal or of greater proportional numbers, have been successfully refused. But it will always be for government and the legis-



lature to consider whether they will be able to resist certain other favourite claims now in abeyance, when political interest and power are added to numbers.

If the Catholic claims are to be discussed upon the basis of abstract right, without any regard to expedience,—which is also a right, or something in the nature of a right;—a fatal question instantaneously occurs : Why should a separate and powerful island of Catholics be dependent upon an island of Protestants ?

The propensities of the author appear again—

“ In his ecclesiastical capacity, and as supreme head of the  
 “ Christian church, Leo the Tenth has been treated with great  
 “ freedom and severity. Even the union of the temporal and spi-  
 “ ritual power in the same person has been represented as totally  
 “ destructive of the true spirit of religion, and as productive of  
 “ an extreme corruption of morals. The ecclesiastical character,  
 “ says a lively writer, ought to have the ascendancy, and the tem-  
 “ poral dignity should be considered only as the accessory; but the  
 “ former is almost always absorbed in the latter. To unite them  
 “ together is to join a living body to a dead carcase, a miserable  
 “ connection, in which the dead serves only to corrupt the living,  
 “ without deriving from it any vital influence. The Lutheran  
 “ writers have indeed considered this union of spiritual and tem-  
 “ poral authority, as an unequivocal sign of Antichrist; yet it  
 “ may be observed, that even after the Reformation the necessity  
 “ of a supreme head in matters of religion, was soon acknowledged,  
 “ and as this was too important a trust to be confided to a separate  
 “ authority, it has, in most Protestant countries, been united with  
 “ the chief temporal power, and has thus formed that union of  
 “ church and state, which is considered as so essentially necessary  
 “ to the security of both. Hence, if we avoid the discussion of  
 “ doctrinal tenets, we shall find that all ecclesiastical establish-  
 “ ments necessarily approximate towards each other, and that the  
 “ chief difference to an individual is merely whether he may choose  
 “ to take his religious opinions on the authority of a Pope or of a  
 “ Monarch, from a consistory or a convocation; from Luther, from  
 “ Calvin, from Henry the Eighth, or from Leo the Tenth.”  
 Vol. IV. p. 320.

An individual in this country is allowed to adopt any kind of religious opinion, and almost any kind of worship. But the legislature have thought it right, for the sake of peace, that

those who are to teach the existing and rising generation, having the reward of their labours, should teach a certain established doctrine. Nor does the author meet the objection of the Reformers, according to his own mode of stating it. The Pope is really a priest, his temporal character is adventitious; but the King of England, in assuming the title of supreme head of the church, does not take the habit, nor perform the functions of the priesthood. The cases do not bear a comparison, and no impartial man would make it: The King's office is temporal in every act that he does as supreme head of the church. The Pope makes war, and performs divine service. But in Vol. 1. p. 28, there is a passage, which makes it doubtful, whether this apparent partiality for Popery is not something merely political. It is said, with an air of complacency, that

“ The associates of Lorenzo, were much better acquainted with the writings of the poets, and *doctrines* of the antient philosophy, than with the *dogmas* of the Christian faith.”

In a passage, Vol. 3, p. 129, there is a vehement philippic against capital punishments. The indignation of the author breaks forth in the following apostrophe—

“ Are such punishments intended as a retribution for the crime? Justice then degenerates into revenge. Are they for the purpose of deterring others from like offence? Care should be taken not to render the offenders objects of compassion, and to prevent that reaction of opinion, which loses the guilt of the criminal in the cruelty of the judge. Are they intended to correct the excesses and to improve the morals of a people? How can this be effected by spectacles that outrage humanity, and which, by their repetition, steel the heart against all those sentiments, by which the individual and general safety of mankind are secured much more effectually than by gibbets, halters, racks and chains.”

What are the sentiments, by which the author supposes that the individual and general safety are so well secured? If any, compassion.—But tenderness of feeling, is a weak restraint upon violent dispositions.—Mr. R. is a professor of the modern school of philosophy; of those who look upon the human

mind as a kind of machine, which by some rare efforts of invention may be brought to perfection, like those deluded men who live in the expectation, that life will be prolonged to eternity by progressive improvements in the medical art. He thinks that the public security is better maintained by compassion---by that tenderness of heart, which revolts at cruelty, than by fear. If a feeling, such as the author supposes, was universal, one of the great difficulties of government would be removed. Every act of violence would punish itself; the oppressor would suffer more pain than the object of oppression. It is indeed a captivating system, and there is in the mind a tendency to virtue, which requires only proper cultivation to make it habitual. But mankind is a various race. And although it is obvious that the government of men would become almost impossible, if none of these milky natures were to be found in a community, yet it cannot be denied that there are also men of fierce and uncultivated, or of depraved, natures, not to be controlled but by the utmost rigour of example. These are the tempers which are kept in awe by the terrors of punishment. And if the commission of crimes, atrocious in themselves, or fatal to society in their consequences, is frequent, severity in the punishment must be proportionally frequent, even if it extends to the forfeiture of life.

In page 39 of Vol. III. we have a hint on the subject of war, which bears the stamp of a sect. "On this spot polluted with carnage, Francis gave orders that three solemn masses should be performed, one for the victory," &c. In this passage, the author shews, by a single phrase, to what school of philosophy he belongs. Between *the pollution of carnage* and *the solemn thanksgiving*, there is an affected antithesis that cannot be mistaken. Unnerved by an excess of sensibility, and rendered unfit to bear a part in the mingled scene of human action, there are men who conceive and inculcate a kind of closet system of benevolence, which is admired by those who delight in curiosities for the sake of its rarity; but many that



have earned a reputation for wisdom and virtue, seem to be of opinion that there are cases, in which a nation may return thanks to a just and benevolent and all-powerful Being, for a victory, although accompanied with carnage ; that it is not inconsistent for a victorious army to praise God upon the field of battle, nor for an individual, with unwashed hands, and the instrument of death in his grasp, to bless his Creator for his own deliverance by the destruction of his enemy. Now prospective danger is to a nation, what present impending danger is to an individual. The ultimate question in point of morality, is to ascertain who is the aggressor. But the full consideration of this subject cannot come within the limits of a review, and therefore it may suffice to say, that if the philosopher was attacked by a ruffian in his closet, or if he apprehended danger to himself or his connections from a nation of robbers and assassins, he would understand those sentiments, which now appear so inhuman. Among other motley half-digested opinions, the work contains a passing censure on the present mode of education.

“ To Giovanni, we find (vol. 1, p. 25,) the business of education was, as indeed it ought to be to every young person, the highest amusement and gratification, and he never experienced those restraints and severities, which create a disgust to learning, instead of promoting it.”

It will be an age happy to mankind, when learning is made an amusement,---happier still when the character is formed to virtue by the same alluring process. But that is the expectation of a time when the nature of man is to be changed. Children are then to love labour---masters unavailing trouble, and every age and degree will delight in self-denial. This indeed is the very state of things, to which our holy religion would guide us ; but until this blessed æra shall arrive, we must have some compulsive means to urge unwilling natures and curb the perverse. Some animals are led---some must be driven, and surely there is not in man such a propensity to virtue, that he

requires no stimulation. If children understood their own interest and loved it above momentary pleasure ; if they could be at once endued with the reason of men, and have experience without age, there is some ground for the new doctrines in the matter of education. It would be a waste of criticism to say much upon the style of this work. The thoughts are puerile and deformed by affectation. The diction abounds with superfluities, and the work altogether deserves the character of the laboriously diffuse. Of the redundancy and inaccuracy of diction examples are unnecessary ; it is rare to open the book at any page, which is free from solecism or superfluous words. It appears that the work was in part designed to be a history of the revival of learning, instead of which it turns out to be little more than a miscellaneous collection of literary anecdotes, and morsels of poetry not above mediocrity.

LETTERS FROM A LATE EMINENT PRELATE TO ONE OF HIS FRIENDS.—*London: Printed for T. Cadell and W. Davies, Strand. 1809.*

THIS valuable collection of letters, which passed between two eminent prelates, whose correspondence commenced sixty years ago, in 1749, and was continued to 1776, is now, after the lapse of more than thirty years, made public, by the following *Entry on a blank page in the first of five port-folios, containing the originals of the following letters, viz.*

“ These letters give so true a picture of the writer’s character, and are, besides, so worthy of him in all respects (I mean, if the reader can forgive the playfulness of his wit in some instances, and the partiality of his friendship in many more) that, in honour of his memory, I would have them

“ published after my death, and the profits, arising from the  
“ sale of them, applied to the benefit of the Worcester In-  
“ firmary.

“ January 18th, 1793.

“ R. WORCESTER.”

If the venerable prelate, who was well convinced that these letters of Bishop Warburton *give so true a picture of his character, are so worthy of him in all respects*, and reflect such *honour on his memory*, could have overcome his modest repugnance, and given them to the world, when the character of his friend and patron, might have received an earlier and more effectual benefit by their publication, I think he would have gained more credit by the benignity of his motive, than he could have risked by the display of Warburton's partiality for him. It was then the memory of that great and learned scholar stood in need of a defender : I knew him well, and have perfect recollection of the severity, which was vented upon his character by many, whom his controversial spirit (with too little mitigation I confess) had sorely galled. Some, who had not dared to face him when alive, insulted over him in the grave ; in that moment, had I been armed with such a body of evidence to meet, refute, and overthrow their calumnies, or in the very words of the testamentary note, with *so true a picture of the character* of my departed friend, would I have kept these letters muzzled and locked up, when, in duty to the dead, I was called upon to produce them? Certainly I would not. It would have been very natural for me to have entered my protest against the praises so partially bestowed upon me, and not to have waited for the event of my death to make that apology, which would so well have become me to have made whilst living.

It must be acknowledged that Warburton observes no moderation in the applauses which he bestows upon his correspondent ; and it would be taking a very false and flattering estimate of Hurd's literary talents, considerable although they



were, to attempt at saying that they are not overrated by his partial friend; but partiality, which springs from friendship, is in itself a pardonable, nay, I might have said, an amiable error; and that affection must indeed have acted powerfully on the heart of Warburton, which could have blinded a discernment so acute as he possessed. I cannot but be sorry therefore, knowing him as I did, that he was not sooner made known to the world at large; the candid part of which could not but have been gratified to find, that his nature, generally esteemed so stern, was susceptible, even to a weakness, of such tender feelings towards a worthy and ingenious young man, who, in the commencement of his authorship as editor of Horace's Art of Poetry, had been civil to him, and was repayed for his civility by the following elegant and very condescending paragraph in Letter I.

“ You have given very little advantage to the critics, but  
 “ where you speak of me; and yet my self-love will not suffer  
 “ me to wish it unsaid, when I consider how much real honour  
 “ is done to every one, whom such an author commends.”

That this great man had really all the sensibility, which he thus expresses towards Mr. Hurd for his attentions to him, I can well believe; when even I, for only mentioning him with respect in a pamphlet addressed to Bishop Lowth, was honoured with his thanks, and admitted into his acquaintance.

I think it impossible for the reader of these letters not to see and be convinced, that they were written without a view to publication, and that being granted, I presume it follows that they may be fairly trusted as *a picture of his character*, spread however and scattered over such a breadth of canvass, in so great a variety of tints, dispersed at random without any form or order of a regular composition, that I do not see how they can be reviewed, unless by the laborious method of assorting and combining the detached parts in such a manner as to harmonize with each other, and thereby bring the pic-

ture, which at present is a mingled mass of light and shade, to an uniformity of hue, and fair similitude to the person it is meant to represent.

This I will endeavour to do; and should the picture, when thus fairly set to view, present its original in a truer and more favourable light, than he has hitherto generally been seen in, I shall flatter myself that I have put criticism to one of its worthiest uses, and in some degree obtained the object I had most at heart, when I undertook the unenviable task which I am now engaged in.

My business being simply to review this volume, what I find in it to the purpose of delineating Bishop Warburton's character I will correctly state, and nothing more; and if, through the whole course of a correspondence carried on for nearly thirty years, his Letters shall be found to evince a candour and sincerity so strongly marked, that even an enemy could not dispute the stamp of truth, that is upon them, I shall quote them as authorities, and conclude accordingly.

The first and most important point to be ascertained by my review of these Letters is, whether they give any insight into his character as a Minister of the Gospel, sincerely devoted to the religion he professed, and a firm opponent to all whose infidelity provoked them to assail it. It is well known that attempts were made by some of his hostile contemporaries to prejudice the world against him, on the score of orthodoxy, and these insinuations may not yet have wholly spent their spite; it cannot, therefore, be too late, and out of place, to examine whether the dignity to which he was elevated in the Church, ought to be considered as disgraced by him, and the learning he was possessed of remembered only to his shame, or in few words, whether the insinuations above alluded to were not grossly injurious and unfounded.

Sherlock, when Bishop of London, writing to Mr. Warburton, then only a private and unbeneficed Clergyman, says in his Letter of the 10th of December 1749—

“ I am told we are to expect something from your hand in vindication of the miraculous prevention of Julian’s attempt to rebuild Jerusalem. *I have a pleasure in seeing any thing of your’s*; and I dare promise myself to see the argument, you have undertaken, set in a true and clear light.”

It will be readily admitted, that few men can be named less likely to make an hypocritical compliment to any man at the expence of his conscience, especially on a point of religion, than the illustrious writer of this paragraph.

The following passage in Mr. Warburton’s Letter to Mr. Hurd, No. 23, is so uncommonly fine, and so fully to the point, that, if I rested solely upon it as evidence for his religious zeal, I should esteem it quite sufficient.

“ I hear Dr. Middleton has been lately at London, (I suppose to consult Dr. Heberden about his health) and is returned in an extreme bad condition. Seriously I am much concerned for the poor man, and wish he may recover with all my heart. Had he had, I will not say piety, but greatness of mind enough not to suffer the pretended injuries of some churchmen to prejudice him against religion, I should love him living, and honour his memory when dead. But, good God! that man, for the discourtesies done him by his miserable fellow creatures, should be content to divest himself of the true viaticum, the comfort, the solace, the asylum for all the evils of human life, is perfectly astonishing! I believe no one (all things considered) has suffered more from the low and vile passions of the high and low amongst our brethren than myself: yet God forbid it should ever suffer me to be cold in the Gospel interests, which are indeed so much my own, that, without it, I should be disposed to consider humanity as the most forlorn part of the creation.”

I lay this passage before my readers with peculiar satisfaction; as I persuade myself it cannot fail to strike them with admiration of its beauty, and conviction of its sincerity. There is a generous concern for Middleton, who was one in the foremost rank of his opponents, which does honour to his heart, and proves that Mr. Charles Yorke rightly understood his character, when in his letter of September 30th 1746, he makes this remark upon his controversial writings:—

“ If your expostulations have been sometimes too warm, they



“ were not the bitter overflowings of an ill-natured mind, but the  
“ unguarded sallies of a generous one.”

When he is pressing Mr. Hurd to withdraw his attention from subjects foreign to his profession, and address himself to the study of the Bible and the defence of religion, he says—

“ You was made for higher things ; and my greatest pleasure is,  
“ that you gave me a hint you are impatient to pursue them. What  
“ will not such a capacity with such a pen do, either to shame or  
“ to improve a miserable age ? The Church, like the ark of Noah,  
“ is worth saving ; not for the sake of the unclean beasts and  
“ vermin, that almost filled it, and probably made most noise and  
“ clamour in it, but for the little corner of rationality, that was  
“ as much distressed by the *stink*” (I wish he had said *stir*)  
“ within, as by the tempest without.” L. 46.

This is a curious extract, and altogether in his lashing way ; zealous for the Church, but quite bitter enough towards certain churchmen,

“ *Soli æquus virtuti atque ejus amicis.*”

Upon the attainment of his object by persuading his correspondent to devote himself to studies proper to his profession, he is extremely urgent. In his Letter, No. 25, he says,

“ You rejoice me much in what you tell me of your purpose to  
“ set upon a thorough study of the Bible.”

And a little further on he adds,

“ I wish I was better able than I am to give you my thoughts  
“ of the method to be pursued in this study : but you may serve  
“ yourself of the following hints.”

Then follows a complete body of directions, so methodized and so learnedly selected, as to prove that nobody was better able to afford that assistance, which he modestly considers himself as not fully competent to give. It is well worth the learned reader's while to advert to this very interesting and important Letter, which he will find at page 57, (octavo edition) and is the 25th in the book. Again he says, in Letter 27,

“ Nothing could give me greater [pleasure] than to find you

“have a determined purpose to prosecute the study of Theology,  
 “at the fountain-head. You are the only successor I could wish  
 “to have ; and if, for some secret reasons of Providence, these  
 “attempts be not defeated, I am sure, if you live, you will effect  
 “what I attempted, to make Revelation understood, which we  
 “are ignorant of to a degree, that will hereafter appear amazing  
 “to you : but—

“*Ex me verumque laborem,*  
 “*Fortunam ex aliis—*”

If these are instances sufficient to demonstrate his anxious desire to engage his friend in the like religious duties with himself, the ensuing quotation will shew, that whilst he felt in their full force the labour of those duties, he was nevertheless conscientiously determined to persist in them.

“Could you satisfy me, that the duties of my profession required no further of me, than the weak efforts I have already made in support of falling religion, I would never more set pen to paper. For all I shall ever get by these attempts (and I shall now never write on other subjects) will be only outrageous abuse from the profligate and infamous, and nameless inhabitants of garrets and prisons ; of which I have already had much more than my share.” Letter 76.

To the same effect in Letter 66, when speaking of his *Views of Bolingbroke*—

“I tell it you in confidence, I am apprehensive of displeasing some by it, whom I most honour, and at a critical time. So that I solemnly assure you, nothing but the sense of indispensable duty as a Christian and a Clergyman could have induced me to run the hazard of doing myself so much injury. But *jacta fuit alea*. All other considerations are now past with me ; and let Providence take its course, without any solicitude on my part.”

Sensations of this sort, confidentially imparted to the friend of his heart, are testimonies so very strong of a religious zeal, paramount to the influence of worldly interest, and the allurements of mental quiet and repose, that none who give credit to the reality of these natural feelings, can question the sincerity of him who overcame them.

With what keenness and contempt he inveighs against the enemies of religion, with Bolingbroke at the head of them,

many instances might be adduced from this collection of his Letters ; but upon a point, so readily to be allowed, a very few extracts will be quite sufficient. In Letter 41, he says,

“ Bolingbroke's Letters on History you know I have read formerly ; but it was eight or nine years ago, and I had forgot every word he had said against the Canon, as well as every word I had said for it ; which made me anxious about the fate of that scrub paper, which I had so foolishly scribbled, and in so much hurry. But the perusal of the book has set me at rest. You will know why, when I tell you I heartily wish that all, who hereafter shall be so weak or so wicked to write against Revelation, may write just like this formidable politician.”

This wish holds out no great favour I confess, yet it would bestow something better than infidels deserve ; for Bolingbroke had a style, though he and his works are now no longer in request. And such shall be the end of all the works and all the words of every man, who risks his feeble wit against the power of the Almighty Mind. Nothing about such a man can have a claim on time, except the punishment he is destined to endure. His blasphemies, which for a while made chilling winter all around him, shall sink and melt away, when truth, bursting like the light out of chaos, shall throw the splendour of his beams upon us. Still there are fools upon this foolish earth, who scribble against God ; maniacs, who break loose from the tomb, and invite us to lie down with them in the dust, and barter immortality for sleep. What do these dotards aim to get by their audacious phrensy ? Let them look back to Hobbes, to Bolingbroke, to Hume : these men had genius ; God gave them mental energy ; and when he put reason into their hearts, he put a weapon into their hands, heavenly-tempered ; but he did not arm them against Heaven itself : therefore they are stricken down, and instead of gaining the applause of men, are destined to inherit nothing but contempt, of which let every disbeliever take the following extract as a sample :

“ I am strongly tempted to have a stroke at Hume in parting. He is author of a little book called Philosophical Essays ; in one



“ part of which he argues against the being of a God, and in an-  
 “ other (very needlessly you will say) against the possibility of mi-  
 “ racles. He has crowned the liberty of the press : and yet he has  
 “ a considerable post under government. I have a great mind to do  
 “ justice on his arguments against miracles, which I think might be  
 “ done in a few words. But does he deserve notice ? Is he known  
 “ amongst you ? Pray answer me these questions : for if his own  
 “ weight keeps him down, I should be sorry to contribute to his  
 “ advancement to any place but the pillory.”

But this pillory does not satisfy the *stomach of his great revenge* ; again he fulminates from the recesses of his closet against this enemy to religion—

“ There is an epidemic madness amongst us. To-day we burn  
 “ with the feverish heat of superstition ; to-morrow we stand fixt  
 “ and frozen in atheism. Expect to hear that the churches are all  
 “ crowded next Friday, and that on Saturday they buy up *Hume's*  
 “ new essays ; the first of which (and please you) is *The Natural*  
 “ *History of Religion* ; for which I will trim the rogue's jacket,  
 “ at least sit upon his skirts, as you will see when you come hither  
 “ and find his margins scribbled over.”—(Is not this internal evi-  
 “ dence of a private letter *more suo* ?)—“ In a word, the essay is to  
 “ establish an atheistical naturalism, like Bolingbroke, and he goes  
 “ on upon one of Bolingbroke's capital arguments, that idolatry  
 “ and polytheism were before the worship of the one God. It is  
 “ full of absurdities ; and here I come in with him ; for they shew  
 “ themselves knaves ; but, as you well observe, to do their business  
 “ is to shew them fools. They say this man has several moral qua-  
 “ lities. It may be so. But there are vices of the mind as well  
 “ as body ; and a wicked heart, and more determined to do public  
 “ mischief, I think, I never knew. This essay has so much pro-  
 “ voked me, that I have a great deal to say to him occasionally on  
 “ other accounts.”

To review a writer of this character is a task of honour and delight. When we cold critics come in contact with his glowing genius, the vivifying mass may throw out sparks, which, if there be any principle of electric sympathy in us, who elicit them, may even from our incombustible strike out something that resembles fire.

There are calmer reasonings for offenders of less magnitude than Hume, as for instance with respect to Dr. Middleton—

“ I disagree with the Doctor in his two general questions. The  
 “ first is, that there is no *system of prophecy*, but only particular

“ detached, unrelated prophecies. His reason is, that Christ and  
 “ his apostles refer only to such. By the same kind of reasoning I  
 “ could prove that there is no *system of morals*, because Christ and  
 “ his apostles recommend and inforce only particular detached vir-  
 “ tues occasionally. But is not the reason of this evident enough?  
 “ They had to do with the common people, who cannot compre-  
 “ hend or attend to a long deduction or chain of things. They can  
 “ only see simple truths, and it is well they can see them. Take a  
 “ plain man with an honest heart, give him his Bible and make him  
 “ conversant in it; and I will engage for him he will never be at  
 “ a loss to know how to act agreeably to his duty in every circum-  
 “ stance of life. Yet give this man a good English translation of  
 “ Aristotle's *Ethicks* (one of the most complete works for method  
 “ in its kind) and by that time he has got to the end of it, I dare  
 “ say, he will not understand one word he has been reading. But  
 “ is the explanation of the economy of grace, in which is contained  
 “ the system of prophecy, that is, the connection and dependance of  
 “ the prophecies of the several ages of the church of God, there-  
 “ fore of no use? Surely of the greatest. And I am confident  
 “ nothing but the light, which will arise from thence, can support  
 “ Christianity under its present circumstances. But the contend-  
 “ ing for single prophecies only, and by a man who thinks they re-  
 “ late to Christ in a secondary sense only, and who appears to have  
 “ no high opinion of second senses, looks very suspicious. What  
 “ would one think of an advocate at the bar, who when the con-  
 “ trary party had made out his point by a number of various  
 “ circumstances that supported and threw light upon one another,  
 “ should reply and say — ‘You are a maker of fanciful hypotheses;  
 “ you have brought all these various unrelated circumstances into  
 “ a body, or system; but you should consider them as separate  
 “ and distinct, for so they were delivered in at the bar by the wit-  
 “ nesses.’...If the Doctor ever considers these prophecies, as he  
 “ seems to promise he will, I perhaps shall have something to say  
 “ to him.”

Here I conclude my evidence, and will adduce no more ex-  
 tracts in further proof of the sound orthodoxy, as well as the  
 religious zeal, of the great and learned prelate, whose letters are  
 now under my review.

I repeat my before-mentioned observation, that it was a pity  
 to keep him so long out of sight, a defenceless corpse, when he  
 had left these weapons in the possession of a surviving friend,  
 so fitted, as they were, for protecting his remains, and forming  
 round his grave an impenetrable barrier.

If the eyes of a man are the index of his soul, by thus concentrating the rays, that emanated from that soul, I have already made out the most lively and impressive feature in *the picture of his character*, and it only remains to give it a smile of candour and a glow of genius to complete the likeness, and cleanse it from the stains, with which the daubers have been suffered to besmear it; when I may consign it to its station in the Temple, where it ought to be preserved among the British worthies, who have done honour to their country, and faithful service to their God.

I am now to speak of *candour*; and I hope I am speaking to readers, who have a fellow-feeling for the subject. I must premise however, that the candour I am about to give a sample of, is very probably a good deal sweeter and more luscious than some palates will approve of—

“What I am going to say, I say with the utmost sincerity: I think myself very fortunate, that I have, as it were, chalked out the road for such a genius, that will, I see, if he lives, complete what I aimed at, and had only an idea of; not only in this way of writing, but in another of infinitely more importance. I will tell you a truth, though it ought more to offend my modesty than your’s; I shall take more pleasure in being outdone by you, than in obtaining any literary victory over a learned adversary.” (Letter 28.)

This is a very complimentary assertion, but the person it is addressed to, did not put the truth of it to the test. It reminds me however of something very like it, which the Bishop said to me in Grosvenor-square one day, where I found him sitting in his study. After talking in high praise of my grandfather Bentley, and not very rapturously of Bishop Lowth, by a sudden transition of thought he started away from the subject, and, pointing to a shelf of books, too high for him to reach, and too far off for me to read the letters on their backs—“There,” he cried, “there is a man” (personifying a small octavo) “the first of all scholars and the best of all men; illustrious by his talents, and venerable for his virtues.” I knew he did not



mean Lowth, so I made a bow for Bentley, which he interpreted as an acknowledgement for Hurd; for this I was soon made to understand, as he went on declaiming very much in the strain of the letter just now quoted.

It has been matter of surprise to me, that in the whole course of this long and unreserved correspondence I have never been able to discover one vain word to have proceeded from his pen in praise of his own compositions, but uniformly to the contrary.

“ I envy [our friend Browne] one quality, and that is, bringing his notions and his compositions to perfection at a heat; for I believe you will find his second edition *verbatim* the same with the first. For my own part I have so imperfect an idea of my subject, and rough-cast my composition so loosely, that my works, if they escape damning, are yet in a state of purgatory, and with so much terrestrial matter about them, that they would take till Plato's great year to purge and purify, had I time, and nothing else to do but to attend to them.”---Letter 35.

Men are apt enough to talk humbly of their performances to people, who praise them; but few speak contemptuously of them to a bosom-friend. In the 43d letter he says—

“ I have thoughts of sending you very shortly a specimen of my volume of sermons, to have your and Mr. Balguy's free thoughts of them. You shall see the first four. To tell you truly, and without affectation, I don't know what to think of them. If you think as diffidently as I do, pray tell me so, and I will make short work; for the shortest folly is the best. I think to send all that will be printed, which will be the four first. Two are in the common way of choosing a text to give one an opportunity of saying what one wants to say; the other two are in what I think a better, the explanation of the text.”

In the letter immediately following he observes, that

“ The most sensible thing Garth ever said, he said to his enemies, that for every fault they discovered in his writings he would shew them two. I can safely say I can shew them two hundred in mine for every single fault my enemies are ever likely to find out.”

It is very possible there is something more in this large assertion than can be fairly stated as a proof of modest self-opinion; but be the interpretation what it may, it is certain

there is a great difference in our judgment at the time of writing, compared with what it is at the time of reading and examining our own productions. There is no end to self-correction. I think an author would never send his work to the press, if he did not treat it as a pedagogue treats an incorrigible boy when he gives him one smart flogging and turns him out of school, to be rid of his trouble and his trust at the same time.

The following extract from Letter 47 is curious. Mr. Warburton writes to his friend Mr. Hurd on the 5th of July 1752, and says,

“ I am glad you don't dislike my improvements of the Divine  
 “ Legation. With regard to which I will tell you an anecdote,  
 “ that, however, for aught I know, I have told you before : but  
 “ it is no great matter if I have. When the London Clergy pre-  
 “ tended to be alarmed, and took fire at the Divine Legation, and  
 “ were encouraged in their violence by Potter, the late Arch-  
 “ bishop, (who, however, had the meanness, when I expostulated  
 “ the matter with him, to deny every thing,) he and they had en-  
 “ deavoured to persuade certain persons of great name for learning  
 “ with them, (amongst the rest, one who had been a little before  
 “ in a controversy with Middleton about his letter to Waterland)  
 “ to write against my book. They gave out they had engaged  
 “ these considerable hands in this service, who were to demolish  
 “ the book. On which, I resolved to be prepared for them (who  
 “ by the way thought better of it), and give it the severest exami-  
 “ nation myself. I set about this work with great care. I de-  
 “ tected (which I dare say you will think I was best able to do) all  
 “ the *weak parts* of it. I shewed no mercy to them ; and then  
 “ endeavoured to defend them the best I could. I went through  
 “ the work, and committed it to paper ; which I thought I should  
 “ soon have use enough of. But what do you think was the issue ?  
 “ In the first place, as I said, these heroes of literature refused  
 “ to be engaged ; but in their stead there was an army of vo-  
 “ lunteers. My business with these was merely curiosity : I  
 “ wanted to see if any of them had hit upon the weak parts, I had  
 “ been with so much pains providing for ; and I can assure you  
 “ that not one of them has yet been found out by my enemies, and  
 “ do yet remain a secret between God, my conscience, and my  
 “ friends. By my friends I mean all those men of true learning,  
 “ who, without doubt, see them as well as I do ; but for the sake  
 “ of other things, which, if not well executed, they have the  
 “ candour to believe well intended, think ought to be pardoned,  
 “ and not objected to a fallible author.”

This whole relation of a literary anecdote, not extremely interesting, I have inserted, though rather too long as an extract, because it serves to bring out the features of the writer as much as any passage in the volume; and the rather as it is written with more than ordinary carelessness, *currente calamo*, and quite as clearly marked for private communication as if it had been ministerially docketed on the cover, *secret and confidential*. It seems that his volunteer critics overlooked his *weak parts*: this I believe is no new case—at least I can truly say I have witnessed it as an author under their correction, and no doubt am in the fair way to practise it upon those, who shall come under mine, as a critic. I could wish, therefore, that all authors, who commit their *weak parts* to my investigation, would comfort themselves with the reflection, that I have my *weak parts* also, and am very likely not to spy out theirs. And what is there, after all, even in a whole host of critics, of which to be afraid? When drawn up in array, like soldiers on parade, against one poor culprit, their manœuvres to appearance may be rather alarming; but when the word is given to *present* and *fire*, if it shall turn out that these terrific warriors are not flinted, and have only *wooden snappers* in their pieces, and of course no fire in their pans, the culprit must needs be convinced that they are altogether as harmless gentlemen, as the *London Clergy* proved themselves to be to the learned author under my review. I am, therefore, at a loss to understand why the respectable corps of Critics should do themselves the injustice to suppose their faces are so formidable, that they should condescend to an expedient only practised by clowns, of tying themselves up in sacks, so to run races for the sport and amusement of the vulgar.

I have only to observe that the sentence with which Warburton concludes this passage, which I have extracted, is extremely beautiful, and perfectly to my point as an example of his candour. And although this alone might be sufficient to evince what I am willing to establish, yet I cannot withstand



the temptation of adding to it the following quotation, from letter 53, which not only conveys a very elegant compliment to his friend, but is as marked an instance of humility, as perhaps is to be found in the private correspondence of any man whatever, great in talents as he, who wrote it, most unquestionably was—

“ All writers flatter themselves with posterity and a name : and  
 “ the luxury of this imagination I have seen, and now I feel, is infinitely heightened by going down to it inseparably with some  
 “ bosom-friend. All have talked of it with pleasure, and every  
 “ honest man, I dare say, has felt it with more : so it is natural.  
 “ Therefore why should not I indulge it ? And though it be a common boast, why should not I make it, when you have given me so  
 “ generous, so friendly and so noble an occasion ? And I can assure you my perfect consciousness of not deserving any thing you  
 “ say in my favour makes no abatement of my pleasure, because  
 “ it shews in the same proportion the greatness of your affection  
 “ for me, which gives me the greatest pleasure.”

Whether this may strike my readers as it strikes me, how can I pretend to say ? But as I see no reason why I should disguise my feelings, I must once again declare, I should have considered it as a call upon me to have laid this tender, this anxious, modest and affecting appeal before the world, as soon as ever my friend by his decease had made that world posterity to him, which was still contemporary with me. I need not to be told, that thirty years, or thirty thousand, make no portion of eternity ; but knowing that my existence in this life, which at longest is made up of years, is at all times liable to be measured out by moments, I would neither have postponed a duty so pressing, or a gratification so pleasureable, whilst the opportunity was in my power of performing the trust in my own person rather than by my executors.

I sum up all my evidence for his candour in the following beautiful and conclusive portion of the 98th letter, as the writer of which I hold his memory in more honour and esteem, than I do as the author of the *Divine Legation* :—

“ The contents of the inclosed paper is for a note at p. 484 of

“ the second volume of the Divine Legation, where I enter upon  
“ the book of Job. I occasionally take notice of some of my an-  
“ swerers as I go along, in the notes, chiefly Grey and Peters : as  
“ for Worthington, Lowth, Garnet, Chappelow, &c. I am en-  
“ tirely silent on their chapters. The paper I send you is the  
“ introductory note to those mentioned above. I need not ex-  
“ plain it to you : you will understand every word. What I want  
“ to know is, whether some parts of it be not too severe. What-  
“ ever there is of this kind, I shall gladly strike out ; for though I  
“ have had provocation enough, I can assure you, I have no re-  
“ sentment. I perhaps may not be thought the best judge of my  
“ own temper in this matter, and reasonably. But why I say I  
“ have so little resentment I collect from hence, that there is not  
“ one word in this volume against them, which I could not with the  
“ greatest indifference strike out, either with reason or without.  
“ I do not expect the world should do me this justice, because they  
“ are to judge by appearances, and appearances are against me,  
“ for there are caustic strokes enough against the ignorance and ill  
“ faith of my adversaries. But if this be resentment, it is the re-  
“ sentment I should shew against vice and folly in the case of any  
“ other honest man. I only say this to shew you how frankly you  
“ may deal by me, without opposing either my vanity or resent-  
“ ment.”

I think it will be granted, that this correspondence carried on by Warburton for little less than thirty years in one invariable, unstudied, confidential style, without a view to publication, must be, what the Bishop of Worcester describes it to be, a faithful picture of his character ; and being such, I trust that by the selection of these passages above quoted, I have, so far as I have gone, exhibited that character in an advantageous and commendatory light. They are certainly the brightest tints in the mass of colouring, from which I have collected them, for they stamp a liberality of mind and sentiment upon the features of the man they represent, and spread that breadth of light and lustre on the whole, which can only emanate from the soul, when warm and glowing with religious zeal.

As for his pointed repartees, his caustic sarcasms, his sparing hits at contemporary characters, sometimes playful, sometimes serious, they may be, as Benedick says, “ as it shall please God ;” I cannot undertake for them ; for they are sprinkled up and down, like the seed of the sower, with the further resem-

blance to his of being steeped in brine: very many of them however are well worth picking up by the way, and have a reference to men, of whom we like to hear.

Speaking of Pope's imitations of Horace, he remarks that "he held little in common with the Roman poet, besides his comprehensive knowledge of life and manners, and a certain *curious felicity* of expression, which consists in using the simplest language with dignity, and the most adorned with ease." He tells us (which I was not aware of, though perhaps the reader may be) "that a little before his death Pope had planned out an epic poem, which he began to be very intent upon; and that the subject was Brute." I have no doubt it would have been in rhyme.

Of Tillotson he says, "that he was certainly a virtuous, pious, humane and moderate man; which last quality was a kind of rarity in those times.—He thinks the sermons published in his life-time are fine moral discourses: that they bear the character of their author, simple, elegant, candid, clear and rational: no orator, in the Greek and Roman sense of the word, like Taylor, nor a discourser in their sense, like Barrow, free from their irregularities, but not able to reach their heights."—(This is a sample of true criticism, terse, concise, well given and conceived in his very best manner.) He adds, "that he prefers both Taylor and Barrow infinitely to Tillotson. You cannot sleep, (he says,) with Taylor; you cannot forbear thinking with Barrow; but you may be much at your ease in the midst of a long lecture from Tillotson, clear and rational and equable as he is; and very appositely concludes, that perhaps the last quality may account for it."

Of Clarendon he speaks in the highest terms of praise; he calls it his *incomparable performance*. Of Whitelock's Memoirs he observes, that it is only a journal or diary, very ample and full of important matters: that the writer was learned in his profession, and thought largely in religion, by



the advantage of his friendship with Selden, but for the rest that he was vain and pedantic, and on the whole a little genius.

Of Ludlow's Memoirs he says, that as to its composition it is below criticism; as to the matter curious enough, written with the spirit of a furious, mad, but apparently honest republican and independent.

That May's History of the Parliament is a just composition according to the rules of history; written with much judgment, penetration, manliness and spirit, and with a candour, that must greatly increase our esteem, when we understand that he wrote by order of his masters the parliament: that Sprigge's history of Fairfax's exploits, which attempts to supply and fill up the *hiatus*, where May breaks off, follows him *non passibus æquis*, yet is not altogether devoid of May's candour, though it has little of his spirit, and that it is said by Walker to have been written by the famous Colonel Fiennes under Sprigge's name. To these he subjoins a short remark upon Hobbes's history of the Civil Wars, which he calls a strange thing, full of paradoxes, like all his other writings; more philosophical, political, or any thing rather than historical; yet full of shrewd observations. All these, I conceive, are remarks very highly worthy of the reader's notice, and therefore it is that I select them for his observation.

I quote the following passage from letter 15, exactly as it stands, for reasons, that will appear upon the face of it:

“ I have just read the most silly and knavish book I ever saw,  
 “ one Lauder upon Milton's Imitations. An observation at the  
 “ bottom of 44 and the top of 45, proves him either one or the  
 “ other with a vengeance. If there are those things in Masenius,  
 “ why did he not produce them? They are of more weight to  
 “ prove his charge than all he says besides: if they are not, he is  
 “ a knave. I think he has produced about half a dozen particular  
 “ thoughts that look like imitations. But the matter of *imitation*  
 “ is a thing very little understood—However in one view the  
 “ book does not displease me. It is likely enough to mortify all  
 “ the silly adorers of Milton, who deserve to be laughed at.”

The reason assigned by the writer of the passage above

quoted, for his being reconciled in part to Lauder's *silly book*, because it might probably mortify the *silly adorers of Milton*, is an avowal of that daring character, which few writers would like to father, and few reviewers venture to partake in. What degree of *adoration*, as addressed to Milton, it must be, which deserves to be satirized as *silly*, is not easy to define. Yet it is not impossible to conceive a veneration even for the author of *Paradise Lost*, carried to such extravagant excess, as to become ridiculous; for that is what enthusiasm is very apt to be. That divine poem, as it is called, can only be admired in parts; in parts also it is justly to be reprehended; and as a whole, it can only challenge imperfect qualified applause. Samuel Johnson defies us to read it through doggedly and determinately: I believe it would be very irksome. I have been told by an ingenious friend, who has a passion for rare morsels, and makes very admirable use of them in conversation, that in a bookseller's catalogue, antecedent to the fire of London, when those catalogues (like the Alexandrian library in their combustible property only) contributed to the flames, that a quarto copy of the *Paradise Lost* stands marked at one poor shilling only amidst a dunghill full of rubbish at high prices; so much was dirt and dulness in request; so little honoured the immortal muse. This discovery of my ingenious friend justifies the too-discerning purchaser of Milton's copy-right; but it dooms every soul then alive (said bookseller excepted) to everlasting banishment, not into *Boeotia* (for Plutarch was born there, and the climate is too good for them), but into the frozen bowels of the Arctic Circle. These were brutish ignorants; on the other hand I cannot but concede to Warburton, that there may have been such a character in his time, and perhaps there may be now, as a *silly adorer*, who, upon reading Sir John Carr's *Itinerarium*, now fresh from the press, may run down to Cambridge to worship Milton's *lock of hair*, which that communicative traveller (after speaking handsomely of King's-College Chapel) judiciously points out as a spectacle above all others interesting to the

true admirers of sublime poetry. How happy therefore is it for the world, since travellers can furnish us with such discoveries, that Sir John Carr went abroad to write, and did not stay at home to read!

I am not quite prepared to say, that I have met with any *adorer* of Milton so truly staunch and steady as to face the artillery of his rebel angels without flinching, unless indeed it may have been here and there my chance to cross upon some admirer of the Miltonic muse, who being also a maker and vender of gunpowder, has a fair title to his prejudices, and good cause to be thankful even to the devil himself for employing it. Such a gentleman would doubtless have a feeling for such parts of Milton, as make a grand explosion, though I will by no means insinuate that he would be void of taste for other passages, where the state of innocence is described in Paradise, and where of course he could not have the most distant chance of smelling powder.

The time perhaps may come (and it must come soon, or I shall not stay for it) when I shall take occasion to speak of prejudice for great names with more freedom, than I am just now disposed to use. It is enough for me in the mean time to declare, that I am entirely with my author in the substance, though not the terms, of his remark, "that the public is a malicious monster, which cares not what it affords to dead merit, so it can but depress the living." It is upon that very tune I have rung more changes, and more variations, than any other performer of my time; and I will ring them yet again, if I live a little longer.

Of Antiquarianism he says, "that it is to true letters what specious funguses are to the oak, which never shoot out and flourish till all the vigour and virtue of that monarch of the grove be effete and nearly exhausted."

Of the inferior clergy he says, "that the church enriched them, and forbade them to marry; the state impoverished them, and gave them wives to complete their kindness."



Though I have dealt quite largely enough in quotations, yet there is one maxim, which is drawn from so just an observation of human nature, that it is by all means worthy of being kept in remembrance—"In your commerce with the great, if you would have it turn to your advantage, you should endeavour, when the person is of great abilities, to make him satisfied with *you*; when he is of none, to make him satisfied with *himself*."

I have now to the best of my power done my duty to the public, and to the memory of Bishop Warburton. There seems reason to apprehend, that I shall have to row my small cargo of criticism against the current of opinions, which are floating up and down. I am sorry for it, and am by no means biassed by an affectation of singularity. I can discern the weakness of the work, but I flatter myself I have taken a fair and candid part in stating what I conceive to be the strength of it. I have principally selected what I think worthy of being praised; what is not of that description I leave for others to find out: there is enough for both of us. I consider Warburton's letters as decidedly private; I therefore look for his heart in them: I am not so sure of those of Hurd; therefore I am silent about him.

From the Bishop of Worcester's note, which the publisher has prefixed to his volume, I took my hint for reviewing it as a picture of Bishop Warburton's character, and to that I have adhered. Other reviewers, with more ingenuity and less reserve, may probably take occasion to digress into an examination of his works, particularly that of the Divine Legation, which of itself can furnish them with a wide and fertile range for criticism. Here they may display their learning, judgment and discrimination: the opportunity is in their hands, and they have a fair right to avail themselves of it. I know there are some very likely to undertake it, who are happily very capable of executing it well. It will be a high gratification to all

literary men, and a credit to criticism in the best sense of the word, if they succeed in this, and I can most truly say, as their contemporary, countryman and sharer in the same labours, I shall feel a pride and pleasure in their success.

If they will be pleased to rest their attention upon the fifth letter in the collection, where Warburton, at page 9 in the octavo edition, says to his correspondent—"Your generous concern for the character of that truly great and much injured man, Dr. Bentley, charms me;"---the whole Phalaris-controversy may be at their command, and I trust their learned verdict will not dissent from that, which the writer of that letter has given.

If on the other hand amongst the many, who may exercise their privilege over these reliques of a venerable and learned man, now thrown upon the world by the friend, who is no longer living to protect them, any shall be found so insensible to candour and the nobler purposes of criticism, as to make these letters, written in the openness of the heart, a handle for licentious ribaldry and jests, I shall console myself with the hope, that I have not fruitlessly taken pains to convince the serious part of mankind, that it will be against religion itself those coxcombs try their wit, when they shall attempt to ridicule one of its ablest and firmest defenders, in the person of Bishop Warburton.

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I HAVE now, by the contributory essays of my kind assessors, whose names are given in the contents, brought the first Number of our joint work to its conclusion; and I hope that work will out-live me, who am the projector of it, by many generations.

I consider myself in the light of an old public-spirited citizen, who, being seized in his latter days with the romantic idea of doing something, for which he may be remembered by posterity, lays the foundation-stone of a school or college, and endows it for the benefit of those, who may come after him, and rise to fame, when his remains are mingled with the dust. A very few more experiments, like the present, will decide for or against the permanency of my plan. The appeal is made; the work itself invites assistance: I solicit no one: neither leisure, nor disposition, nor delicacy warrant me in calling personally on any man in the vigour of his talents to muster under my standard, tattered as it is with hard unceasing service, and almost dropping from the staff.

It is enough for me, that in sincere and earnest zeal for the interests of literature and the benefit of my contemporaries, I tender to the public this experiment. Be the fate of it what it may, my good will must be its own reward, and the only one, that I expect to receive.

If I have executed my share in this first effort of our understandings with any tolerable success, I must wonder at it; for there seemed to be about as much chance



for me, as for Ixion on his wheel, to write Reviews worth any body's reading; such have been the accumulated pressures that have weighed upon me: but God hath given me a spirit, and I have preserved to myself a conscience, that can support me under any visitation, that does not haunt me in the likeness of dishonour.

The world, as it is called, by which in fact I mean only that very small part of it who think it worth their while to concern themselves about this undertaking, are very sure we cannot go on with it. All I have to say to that is—I am not discouraged: I have many more resources in reserve, than I ever expected; and though I cannot deny but that I have experienced something, not strictly reconcileable with fair and honourable dealing, yet I have found means to reconcile myself to it, and am upon the whole extremely thankful and content. Therefore I conclude, that they, who say we cannot go on, must ground their opinion upon premises not very creditable to mankind, and of course they will always have the worst side of the argument, even should they chance to be right in their conclusion.

I find myself constrained to apologize to the public for editing a second prospectus, with the omission of

one particular paragraph, which upon further trial I could not adhere to. Some, and I believe the majority, of the friends, whose able contributions form a considerable portion of the preceding pages, have occasionally lent their aid to other periodical publications; and unless by their assistance, for which I am most truly thankful, and of which I have just reason to be proud, this Number, now by them and by myself submitted to the candour of our readers, had never seen the light.

**RICHARD CUMBERLAND.**

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